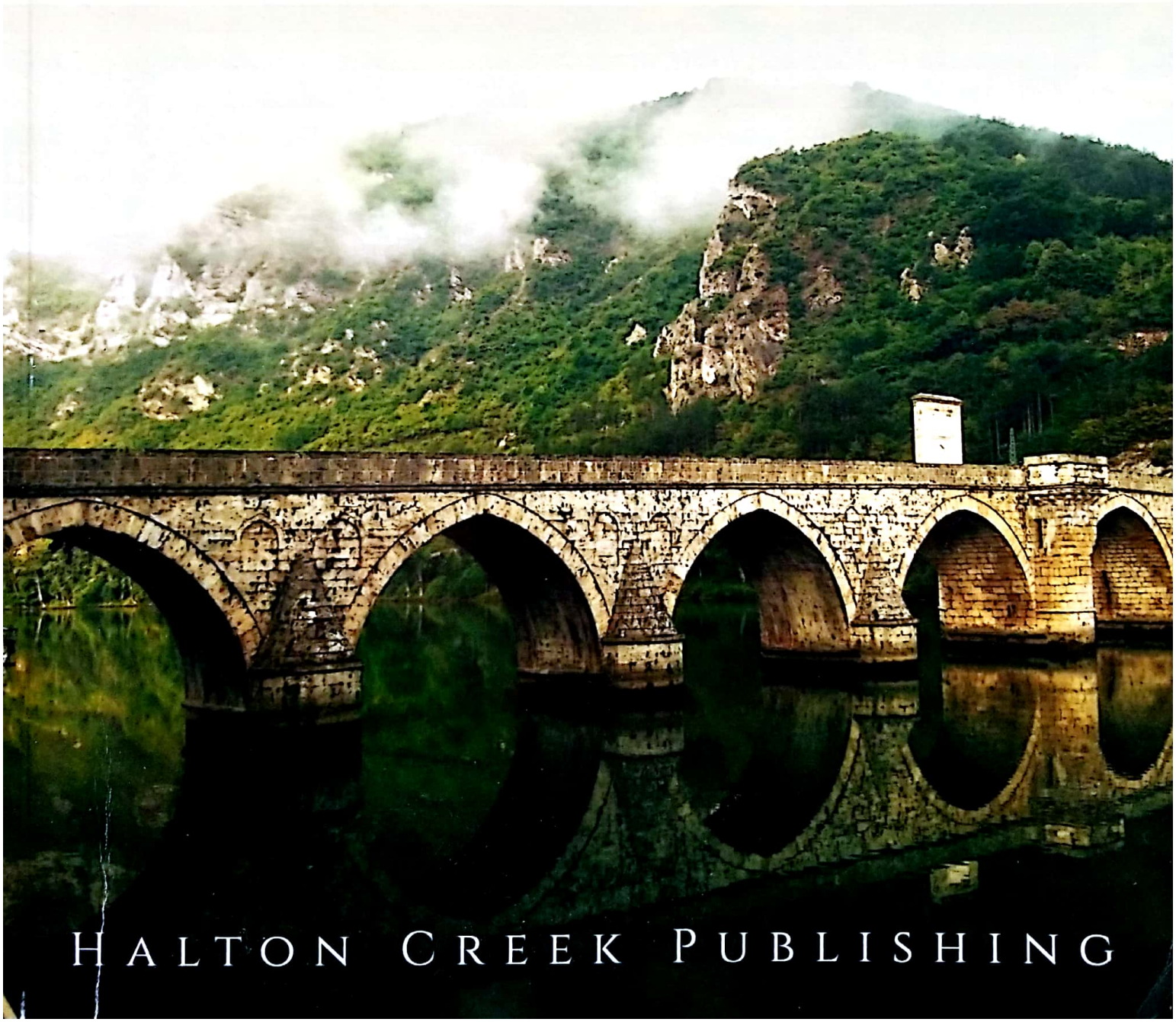
THE HISTORY OF BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA

IRFAN MIRZA



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THE HISTORY OF BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA

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Cover: Sokolović bridge in the Eastern Bosnian town of Višegrad, designed by Ottoman engineer and architect Mimar Sinan, who influenced the architecture of Stari Most in Mostar.

Cover design: Adam Mirza.

Inside page artifact: Herald and coat of arms of the Kingdom of Bosnia-Herzegovina from the medieval era. This artifact is archived in Zemalski Muzej Bosne i Hercegovine / National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Back cover: The author at Radimlja Necropolis. Photo by Selvir Galešić, expedition leader to Paleolithic sites.

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This book was only possible with the help of Sabina Šutković, who contributed to it beyond measure.

Inspired by my children and the brilliant scholars at the Bosnian American Institute.

Dedicated to the memory of my parents, who taught me to value and respect history.

Deep gratitude to Dr. Haris Silajdžić for his kind and insightful foreword, and intellectual generosity.

Zemalski Muzej Bosne i Hercegovine / National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

With appreciation for Zemalski Muzej Bosne i Hercegovine / National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and its directors and staff, for making available original photographs and archival content of some of the museum's most precious and valued artifacts.

The role of the museum is critical in archiving historical artifacts that constitute the national assets of Bosnia and Herzegovina and tell the story of the nation and its people.

The author and publisher thank the museum and staff for their cooperation and dedication to the cause of preserving the history of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The views and analysis expressed in this text are not representative of the museum or its staff.

Photos (above and right): © 2017 Irfan Mirza.

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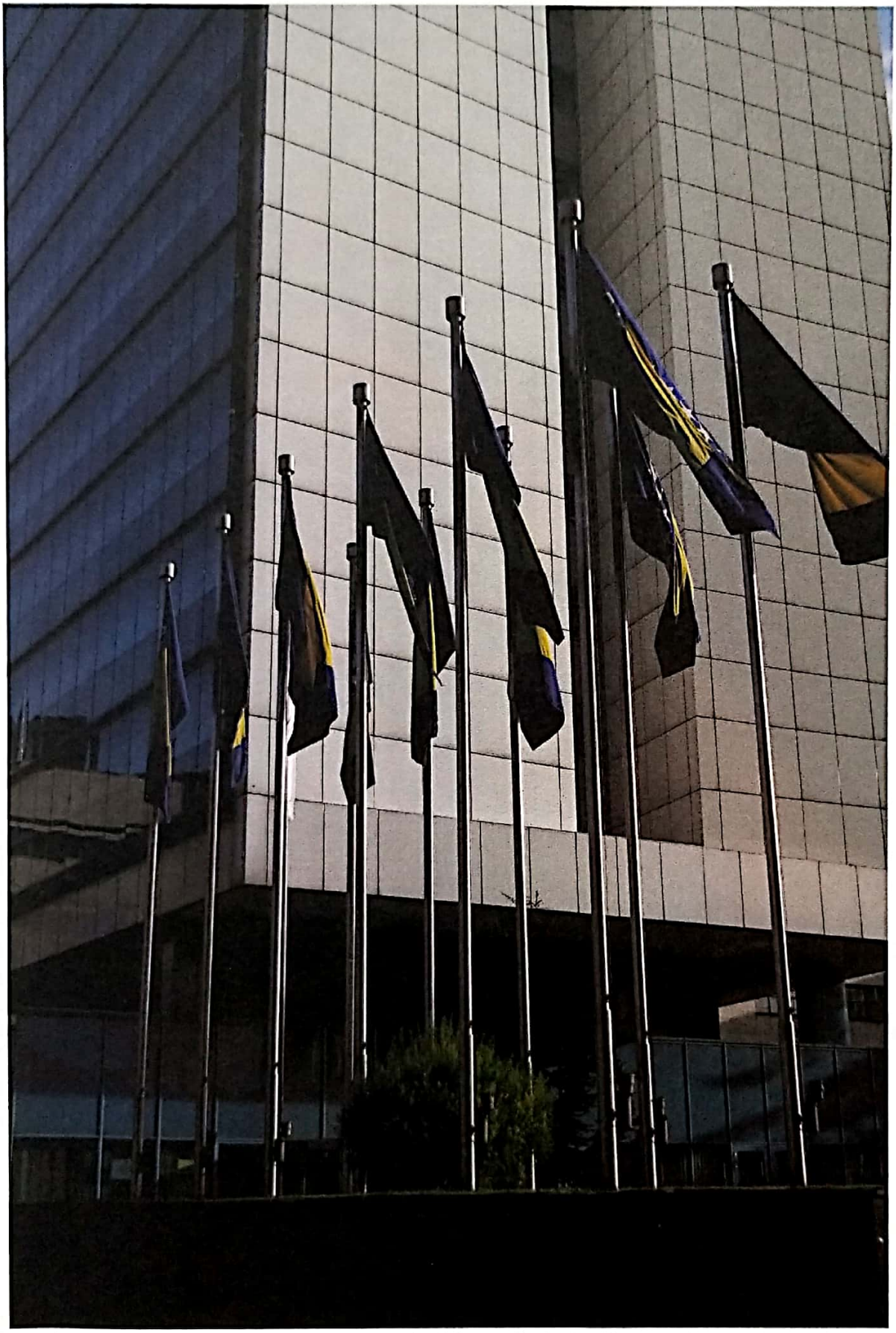

Bosnia and Herzegovina's flags at the courtyard of the nation's Parliament. Photo © 2017 Irfan Mirza.

Dr. Haris Silajdzić, former President and Chriaman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who wrote a foreword for the second and later editions of this book. Photo © 2018 Irfan Mirza.

FOREWORD

A significant portion of the scholarly work on the history of Bosnia and Herzegovina has distorted reality to the extent that it has become paradigmatic of the study of history—one that serves ideological and political ends. This is especially so in the case of regional scholarship on Bosnia and Herzegovina. The latest such distortion has been introduced in the form of the phrase "civil war" applied to the events of 1992-1995 in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Under the umbrella of "ancient hatreds", "warring parties", and "not adding fuel to the fire", a United Nations' (UN) arms embargo was imposed, depriving the civilians of Bosnia and Herzegovina their right of self-defense. The consequences have been devastating: genocide, mass deportations, massacres, concentration camps and other crimes.

The verdicts of the UN Tribunal in The Hague ruled something that has always been clear – the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina was an international conflict, not a civil war. Its perpetrators were sentenced to extensive periods in prison, but their mission remains intact.

Is Bosnia and Herzegovina sentenced to be a prisoner of a fascist scheme, with an embargo on democracy in peace time? Having made peace in Dayton, have we also made peace with fascism? That remains to be seen. Such is the consequence of scholarship in the service of politics.

Irfan Mirza has set out to "reconcile differences between historical conjecture and scientific discovery," conducting thorough research through the means of critical examination; thus, consulting a large body of works in archeology, genetics, geology, history, diachronic linguistics, and more.

He started with Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Paleolithic era, and rightly so, for the very origins of Bosnians had been questioned creating excuses for driving the Bosnian and Herzegovinian people out of their land or eliminating them permanently. Thus, he states that a study of genetic of samples in 2004 proved that "Bosnians are descendants of the earliest group of anatomically-modern humans who came to Europe." Consequently, this changes the whole narrative, and has a cascading effect on our understanding of the modern history of Bosnians and Herzegovinians. It also puts to rest erroneous and deceptive ideas and misinformation that has "authoritatively" dominated the narrative for so long with disastrous consequences. The enemies of Bosnia and Herzegovina will have to turn elsewhere for excuses if they continue to target its land and people.

Irfan Mirza did what he had proposed to do: he presented a work founded in science and facts, boldly wading the turbulent waters of Bosnia and Herzegovina. His account is competent, objective, and truthful. These are the correct epithets, the scarcity of which has led to the destruction of an old European, authentically plural society, that, even damaged, still mirrors what a united Europe aspires to be.

- ***Haris Silajdžić,** former President and Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina.*

PREFACE

Coats of Arm s of the Kingdom of Bosnia and Herzegovina over years and rulers. This display is at Mali Muzej, a Sarajevo restaurant dedicated to Bosnia and Herzegovina's history. Photo by Irfan Mirza, with gratitude to Džemal Šurković, founder of Mali Muzej.

Genetic science has changed the way we look at history. Through genetics, we can identify the lineage of people and societies in our past. We can compare their ancestry to their neighbors, and to genetic samples from people who died thousands of years earlier.

We can compare our genetic markers with people in distant lands and determine if they had any common ancestors or descendants. By examining genetic markers, we can determine how people and societies related. We can align genetic findings with events from the earth's geological timeline, and correlate those to anthropology and archeology.

This powerful combination of interdisciplinary sciences can help establish a logical basis to better understand our early societies. We can learn how people moved, where they lived, their culture, traditions, values and priorities, and how they related to each other—in other words, we can better understand their history.

In 2004, a scientific study of genetic samples across some areas of central Europe revealed that Bosnians and Herzegovinians are descendants of the earliest group of anatomically-modern humans in Europe (1 Rootsi). The group they belong to is part of a genetic group classified as *European natives*.

A subset of this group can be found in the highest concentrations within Bosnia and Herzegovina. This fact from genetic science has significant implications on our understanding of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian people and their history. It is one of many factors that change the narrative of the ancestors of modern-day Bosnia and Herzegovina. It has a cascading effect, not just on our interpretation of their pre-history, but on our understanding of their recorded history as well.

Over thousands of years, Bosnia and Herzegovina was attacked by foreign invaders. However, Bosnia and Herzegovina's natives never capitulated. Even when facing overwhelming military power or foreign occupation, they formed a type of resistance that prevented most invaders from infiltrating their language, culture, faith, and other aspects of their social makeup. In response to this resilience to hostility, the invaders developed and deployed tactics that went beyond warfare, to try to achieve the goals of their conquests through other means.

One of these other means was to distort the identity and history of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian people. Another was to pit Bosnians and Herzegovinians against each other, to make them weaker and susceptible to manipulation. A third tactic was to try to eradicate the people completely from the face of the planet—in other words, genocide. After centuries of exploitation through these tactics, Bosnia and Herzegovina's natives lost track of their identity and heritage, and became vulnerable to manipulation and subjugation by would-be conquerors.

"Those who do not remember their past are condemned to repeat it."

George Santayana, Spanish Philosopher from the late 19th and early 20th century

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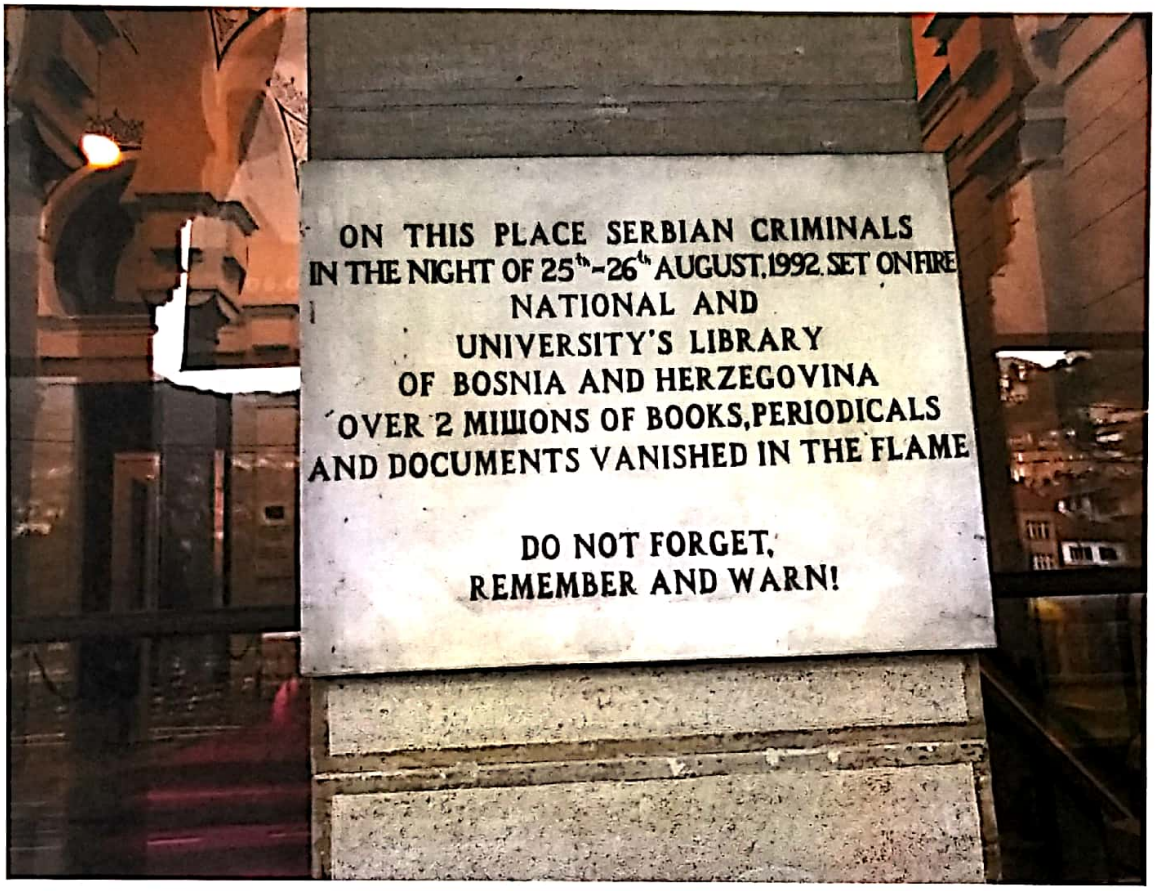
THE HISTORY OF BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA provides a refreshing analysis of the people's history, and draws a narrative that is anchored in science and data. Based on research in genetics, diachronic linguistics, geology, anthropology, history, archaeology, and common sense, this book constructs a more accurate chronicle of Bosnia and Herzegovina's past. It proposes a hypothesis on how that past shapes the present and concludes with how it could influence the future.

Historians have learned that mistakes of the past shape outcomes of the future. This text is an objective look at the past, with an expectation that by learning from it, people will make better decisions for the future.

Author's Note


ON THIS PLACE SERBIAN CRIMINALS
IN THE NIGHT OF 25th-26th AUGUST 1992 SET ON FIRE
NATIONAL AND
UNIVERSITY'S LIBRARY
OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
OVER 2 MILLIONS OF BOOKS, PERIODICALS
AND DOCUMENTS VANISHED IN THE FLAME
DO NOT FORGET,
REMEMBER AND WARN!

Memorial to the 1992 shelling of Vijećnica, the National and University Library in Sarajevo. Photo © 2017 Irfan Mirza.

TLDNR: ***My biggest takeaway from this work is that the history of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina holds lessons that can benefit all of humanity. It is up to us to learn from it.***

Over the centuries, powers from outside Bosnia and Herzegovina have distorted the history of the nation and the origins of its people for the purpose of conquering them and occupying their land. These powers abandoned scholarship and embraced revisionism to construct a historical narrative that suited them. They barraged Bosnia and Herzegovina's history with deceptions, and attacked anyone who stated or believed otherwise.

In the 1990's, ex-Yugoslavia unleashed a genocidal war against Bosnia and Herzegovina when Bosnians and Herzegovinians declared their independence. This war of aggression was led by the Yugoslav People's Army (*Jugoslovenska Narodna Armija* or JNA), controlled by Serbia and Montenegro, and supported by extremist forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina that aligned with Serbia.

The extremist foreign and domestic forces had a single goal—to eliminate anyone who stood in the way of Serbia's plans to expand into something they called "Greater Serbia"—and they did whatever it took to achieve their objectives without regard to humanity. They attacked Bosnia and Herzegovina's sovereignty, infrastructure, people, culture, architecture, and history. Their brutality resulted in a horror that is incomparable to anything seen in Europe since the Holocaust.

The human tragedy and destruction are unparalleled—the extremists destroyed historical and cultural artifacts, religious structures, cultural venues, and documents and manuscripts. Municipal and national buildings, libraries, museums, book stores, and warehouses holding the nation's most precious artifacts were not spared. Many were shelled and set on fire by incendiary munitions. Civil workers and firefighters were shot by snipers as they engaged in salvage and rescue operations. In the national library in Sarajevo alone, about 1.5 million manuscripts were destroyed.

However, that wasn't the first time that this nation, or its history, were attacked. Centuries earlier, Romans attacked it with force. Tribes labeled as *Illyri* (or *Ilyr*) in Bosnia and Herzegovina often endured brutal attacks by the Romans. But sometimes, the attacks resulted in casualties other than *Ilyr*. Through a strategy known as *pars pro toto*, 'a part as the whole,' Roman commanders would justify the widespread casualties in Bosnia and Herzegovina by calling everyone there *Ilyr*, including those who were opposed to them alongside those who weren't.

For decades, the Romans fought these tribes that challenged their authority from Istria to Albania, from the Adriatic to the Danube, down to the Ionian Sea. The *Ilyr* took up residence among Bosnia and Herzegovina's natives, and along the coast in Croatia, Montenegro and Albania. Some of them pirated the Adriatic and Ionian Seas. Others began settling on the eastern and southern coasts of the Italian peninsula. The Romans pushed hard against those *"Ilyr"* who did not ally themselves with Rome, to the point that they resorted to excessive force to defeat them. The disproportionate military action resulted in casualties, both among their enemies and neutral bystanders such as Bosnian and Herzegovinian natives, as well as other groups not related to the warring tribes. To justify the casualties to the Roman Senate, military commanders labeled everyone in Bosnia and Herzegovina as *Ilyr*. They renamed the land to *Illyricum*, which made the collateral damage more acceptable by Roman standards since the *Ilyr* were perceived as villains.

The policy of distorting the origins of the people, and manipulating history with deceptive narratives, was continued by successive powers in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In recent times, scholars have cut through the deception and started presenting more accurate accounts of Bosnia and Herzegovina's history. Authors such as Noel Malcolm, John Antwerp Fine, Ivan Lovrenović, Dubravko Lovrenović, Enver Imamović, Mustafa Imamović, Ahmed Aličić, John Joseph Wilkes, and others, have published historical narratives that challenge some of the deceptions.

Works by other authors provide details about Bosnia and Herzegovina that lead us to examine how the country's history got distorted in the first place. As an example, the work of Nada Klaić clarifies Bosnia and Herzegovina's administrative structure prior to political intervention by Croatians and Serbians. Klaić demonstrates that Bosnia and Herzegovina had a sophisticated political structure that defined the medieval state. Another example is research by Josip 'Jozo' Tomašević, who exposes *četnik* ideology and its role in the second world war. His text serves as a preview into the militarism of modern-day *četniks*, and their tendencies to align with autocratic rule, such as that of Slobodan Milošević, during the Bosnian genocide. Enver Imamović's work, *Porijeklo i pripadnost stanovništva Bosne i Hercegovine*, provides a deep, well thought-out historical perspective on the origins of Bosnia and Herzegovina's population and their identity. Hakija Zoranić's mammoth work, *O etnogenezi Bošnjana – Bošnjaka*, and Vladislav Skarić's *Porijeklo pravosl. naroda u sjeverozap. Bosni* provide deep insights into the tough question of ethnic identity in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

On the other hand, there are works, such as those by Vjekoslav Klaić (Nada's grandfather), Sima Ćirković, Mihailo Dinić, Petar Kolendić, Vid Vuletić Vukasović, and the ex-Yugoslav curriculum standard, *Istorijski atlas: Intersistem Kartografija*, that seem to have been written to serve political agendas and not the interest of scholarship. These texts appear to be obviously ideologically biased, and either intentionally or unintentionally, they diminish Bosnia and Herzegovina's sovereignty, historical relevance, and regional significance.

For decades, these texts were forcefully elevated as "authoritative" sources. Yet, in spite of the blatant nature of the manipulation, historical revisionism didn't end with the older generations of scholars. Even in contemporary times, people such as Petar Đorđić and Aleksandar Mladenović promote Serb claims over Bosnian and Herzegovinian achievments, such as the Bosančica script. Authors such as Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman continue to revise facts about the Srebrenica genocide and they justify Serbian militarism as a necessary "defensive" capability.

Bosnia and Herzegovina's historical narrative has been manipulated and pieced together in a way that interweaves deception and distortion into an inextricable mess. Put simply, the truth is so securely intertwined that no reasonable effort could disentangle it. But that exact challenge is what intrigued me. So, I began unravelling relentlessly and didn't stop until I got it all untangled. At that point, I went to scientific facts to begin constructing a narrative that is based on verifiable discoveries, flows logically across the ages, and follows exacting standards of scholarship. The resultant chronicle leads to an axiological understanding of Bosnia and Herzegovina's rich and important past. This does not mean that there isn't other good scholarship on Bosnia and Herzegovina. There is a body of work in the bibliography that I leveraged; however, I had to surgucally resect rom those texts anything that looked like ideological bias, distortion, or claims that could be contradicted by scientific fact.

There are also many dissertations and articles that I studied and referenced, including works by Marija Gimbutas of UCLA, Đuro Basler, Alojz Benac, Smail Čekić, Marko Attila Hoare, Emir Ramić, and many others. There are some works that I read but did not reference as much directly, such as those by Adil Zulfikarpašić and Muhamed Filipović. Professor Filipović's lifetime dedication has resulted in more than 50 books—of which, I've gone through a dozen, so far.

Other writings and ideas that profoundly reaffirmed my thinking include works and ideas originated by Šaćir Filandra, Ibrahim Pašić, Amir Pašić, Midhat Riđanović, Mak Dizdar, Meša Selimović, Sabrina Ramet, Pedro Ramet, Edward Sebastian Vulliamy, John Burns, Roy Gutman, Samantha Power, Peter Galbraith, Richard Holbrooke, Francis Fukuyama, and others. Some of the ideas of these scholars could be supported by the new facts that I was uncovering. Others made me think about the data that I had collected, and helped me build reference models to explain my discoveries. Additionally, after discussions with Dr. Haris Silajdžić, former President and Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, I realized how important it was for me to publish my work. When I met with him in July 2018 to discuss the second edition, he called this book *"one of the three most important works of scholarship on Bosnia-Herzegovina."*

I want to point out that in spite of the great preservation and analysis by Bosnia and Herzegovina's scholars, I submit there is a deficit in an exacting level of scrutiny about Bosnia and Herzegovina's past that reconciles differences between conjecture and science. I am talking about the type of research and analysis where there is room for an examination that includes genetics, geology, anthropology, archaeology, diachronic linguistics, geography, history, and sociology. This book is one perspective in that type of research, where no prior assumption is deemed sacred.

By leveraging many disciplines, this book replaces guesswork with scientific analysis. It discards biased polemics in favor of honest scholarship. It substitutes prejudice and myth with objective facts. This book is not an attempt at debating any of the prior inaccurate or politically motivated narratives that have been propagated about Bosnians and Herzegovinians. While I call out some egregious fabrications and prejudices, I do so because I feel they have affected or tainted our collective understanding of history. I leave the task of comparative analysis to others. My goal in this book is to unravel a complex, politically charged history that is fraught with controversy and debate.

This book begins at the scientific core, the time that humans arrived in Europe. It follows their journey chronologically to the modern state of Bosnia and Herzegovina, tracing their genetic markers and comparing them with their modern-day descendants and neighbors. It reconciles our understanding of Bosnia and Herzegovina's societies with scientific facts, making corrections to the narrative as needed. This book explores a verifiable history of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina by placing those people in the center of their own story.

Finally, the book goes to great lengths to discuss some historical events that happened outside of Bosnia and Herzegovina. I demonstrate that those events shaped material outcomes in Bosnia and Herzegovina. For example, there is an extensive section on the early days of Christianity. It is important to review how Christianity developed to comprehend the events that led to Bosnia and Herzegovina being declared a heretic kingdom a millennium later. I submit that the declaration calling Bosnia and Herzegovina a "heretic nation" by the Bishop of Rome was made in haste and without fully understanding how some of Bosnia and Herzegovina's population embraced Christianity. A result of that declaration was that thousands of Bosnians and Herzegovinians were killed in the ensuing Crusades. The nation's reputation was tarnished, and the identity of its descendant populations was discolored. The consequences extended to the state and endured for centuries to the present-day. Shortly after the declaration, the existence of the nation-state of Bosnia and Herzegovina in a Christianized Europe, under the supremacy of the *Roman Holy See*, became the subject of debate, when it rightfully should never have been in doubt. The right of Bosnians and Herzegovinias to self-govern was seen as a privilege that needed to be earned through extraordinary demonstrations of loyalty, sometimes requiring the betrayal of principles on which the nation and its notion of civilization were founded. Absent these, the nation was subjected to foreign rule.

Through this type of exploration, the book examines the past and demonstrates correlations that stand to change our understanding of it. For readers who are Bosnian and Herzegovinian, this book is bound to fundamentally challenge a lot of the things that you have been told about your people. For readers who are from one of Bosnia and Herzegovina's bordering neighbors, this book covers the activities of some people from those countries who committed horrific atrocities. Those dark periods are covered in this book, and they could make some people feel uncomfortable. It makes no sense to hide these events even though it might not be "in-trend" to talk about them. The purpose of this book is not to vilify anyone, but the facts have to be told so that we can all learn from them.

Bosnia and Herzegovina faced genocide at the hands of its closest neighbors, Serbia and Montenegro from 1992 to 1995, and Croatia from 1941 to 1944. This book covers those genocides that were unleashed on Bosnia and Herzegovina's unsuspecting population. In balance, the book also covers the beauty of Bosnia and Herzegovina, its deep-rooted beginnings, the magnificent color of its traditions, the authentic intricacy of its culture, and the immense wealth of its people's character.

The facts and conclusions presented in this book should make us pause and better understand how Bosnia and Herzegovina's history really unfolded. I invite you to corroborate the conclusions for yourself. My sincere wish is that students and scholars appreciate the intent and transparency of this work. I hope you benefit from it as much as I did.

- Irfan Mirza

Before Current Era (BCE)

Interglacial Era

- **40,000-25,000 BCE**
- European Natives
- Ice Age Migration
- Bosnia as a Refuge

Paleolithic Era

- **16,000-12,000 BCE**
- Bosnian Nomads
- Hunter-Gatherers
- Bosnian Settlers

Mesolithic Era

- **7500 BCE**
- Fertility Culture
- Bosnian Pottery
- Bosnian Art

Neolithic Period

- **4500 BCE**
- Indo-Europeans
- People named 'Bas'
- Bosnian Agriculture

Iron Age Period

- **1200 BCE**
- Haplogroup I-M170
- Bosnian Identity
- Bosnian Villages

Current Era (CE)

Barbarian Era

- 500 CE
- Roman Era
- Avar & Slavs
- Bosnian Language

Medieval Period

- 1000 CE
- European Invaders
- Feudalism
- Bosnian Kingdom

Post-Classical Era

- 1500 CE
- Ottoman
- Hungarian
- Serb Royalists

Mid-Modern Period

- 1900 CE
- World War I
- World War II
- Yugoslavia

Present Period

- 2000 CE
- Secession
- Genocide
- Independent Bosnia-Herzegovina

Wisdom of the Ages

Ivan Franjo Jukić (1818-1857) was a Franciscan writer and educator, who brought light to ideas of modernism in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the mid-nineteenth century. Fraj Jukić wrote the following:

"Mi Bošnjaci njekad slavni narod sad jedva da smo živi nas samo kao očenutu glavu od stabla slavjanskog gledaju priatelji naukah i žale nas.... Vrime je da se i probudimo od dugovične nemarnosti; dajte pehar, te carpite iz ***studenca pomnje mudrost, i nauk****; nastojte da najpred* ***naša srca očistimo od predsudah,*** *fatajmo za knjige i časopise, vidimo što su drugi uradili, te i mi ista sredstva poprimimo, da naš narod prosti iz tminah neznanstva na* ***svijetlost istine izvedmo.****"*

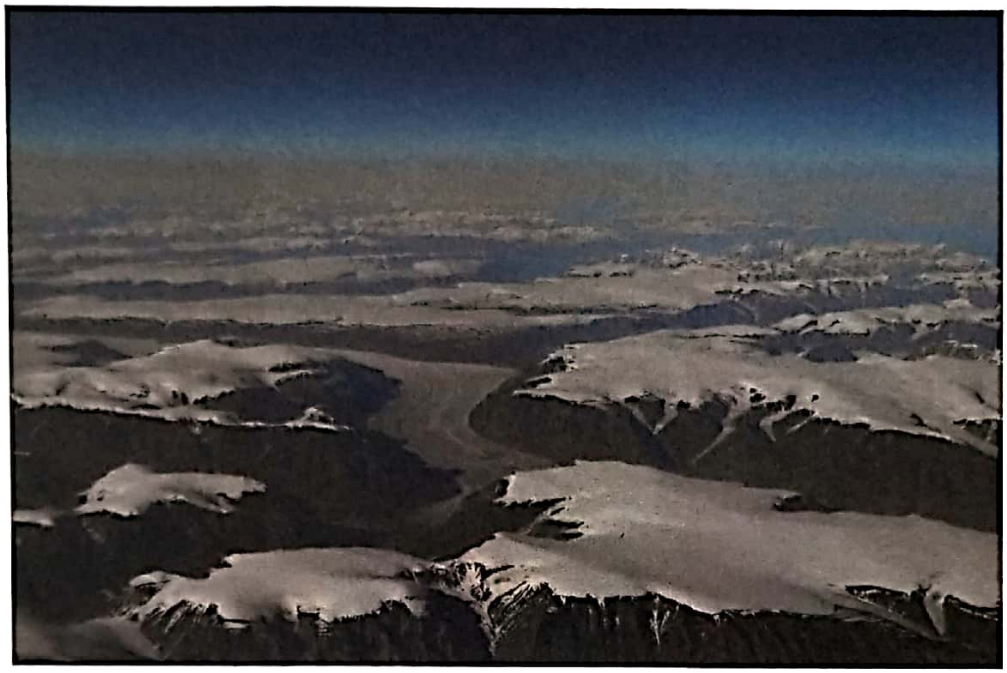
Translation *"We Bosniaks, the once-famous people, are now barely alive as a head detached from the Slavic trunk, watching our friends of science pity us ... It is time to awake from a long negligence; give us the cup, and from the* ***well of apprehension, gain wisdom and science****; let us first try to* ***cleanse our hearts of prejudice****, reach for books and magazines, let us see what others did, so that we can use the same to free our nation of simple people from the darkness of ignorance to* ***the light of truth****."*

Mustafa Imamović (1941-2017) was one of Bosnia and Herzegovina's greatest contemporary legal historians who wrote hundreds of articles and discussions. In his book "Historija Bošnjaka" or "History of Bosniaks," Professor Mustafa Imamović wrote the following:

"Za ovu sam se knjigu pripremao još od rane mladosti, vođen znatiželjom, ali i onim Kantovim [Imanuel Kant] kategoričkim imperativom da čovjek mora djelovati tako da načela njegove volje mogu u svako doba postati općim zakonom. Želio sam se jednostavno orijentirati u svijetu, a uslov za to je bio da saznam ko sam, odakle sam, gdje sam i kuda idem. Samo pisanje ove knjige počeo sam u najtragičnijim momentima za bošnjački narod, osjećajući da je to u tim trenucima moja dužnost prema vlastitom narodu i čarobnoj zemlji Bosni."

Translation *"For this book I have been preparing since early youth, led by curiosity, and with [Immanuel] Kant's categorical imperatives that man must act so that the principles of his will can at any time become general law. I wanted to simply orient myself in the world, and the condition for that was to find out* ***who I was, where I was from, where I was****, and* ***where I was going****. I only started authoring this book in the most tragic moments for the Bosniak people, feeling that in those moments my duty was to my own people and to the magical land of Bosnia. "*

INTRODUCTION



During the last ice age, most of Europe was buried under a thick layer of snow and ice that was piled as high as 5 km in some regions. The ice age forced Europe's native population to migrate south to escape the extreme cold and icy conditions. In search of food and refuge, the population followed the animals they had hunted for generations. Genetics tell us that one group of native Europeans migrated east, another marched west, and a group trekked south along the Dinaric Alps, ending up in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Photo: © 2018 Irfan Mirza, arial depiction of glacial and icy conditions over Greenland, like it was in mainland Europe during the ice age.

The history of Bosnia and Herzegovina dates to a time before modern man's earliest days in Europe. It begins with *hominins* who roamed the region between 97,500 and 42,000 years ago (2 Fekeža) and continues with the arrival of modern humans 24,000 years ago. It is the tale of people who are part of the only native genetic group (1 Rootsi) in Europe, and whose lineage can be traced to one of the earliest migrations of modern human beings into Europe (3 Semino).

Anthropology tells us that about 45,000 years ago, anatomically modern humans journeyed out of Africa to populate distant regions of the world. Genetic studies show that, millenia later, a path taken by descendants of these migrants was through today's Bosnia and Herzegovina (4 Mellars, 2 Fekeža). Upon arrival in that territory, this band split into two groups, one going north, and the other likely scattered or headed east or west. Little is known about the group that scattered. However, the ancestry of modern-day Bosnians and Herzegovinians shows that, some period of time later, the descendants of the tribe that went north (4 Mellars) reunited with the descendants of the scattered group when they both returned to the point where their ancestors divided in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Photo showing contemporary glacial ice and snow conditions in Europe. It was likely not that different for the early humans as they came across their first winter when the climate drove away the wildlife. Photo Simon Steinberger, Sonthofen/Deutschland.

About 25,000 years ago, the last ice age buried more than two-thirds of Europe under a sheet of ice and snow, making it impossible for humans to survive. Food supplies quickly ran out, temperatures became unbearably cold, and the continent's population was forced to seek refuge in milder climates.

Among these refugees of the ice age, a group, known in scientific circles as genetic clade "I1", made its way along the valleys of the Dinarides, or Dinaric Alps, journeying into modern-day Bosnia and Herzegovina. In their new-found homeland, the group discovered a more temperate climate, plentiful game to hunt, tundra and steppe forests, pristine rivers, and a variety of plant food sources for foraging—a bountiful location that became home to a group of Europe's natives.

Genetic analysis tells us that these natives were the offspring of nomads who had split in Bosnia and Herzegovina on their journey into the heart of Europe (5 Rootsi). The group benefitted from milder climate and availability of food in Bosnia and Herzegovina's valleys. The geography made it easier for them to hunt and stay local. These European natives learned to collaborate, resulting in linguistic and cultural consistency within their new homeland, transforming from nomads into settlers, becoming the first native population of Bosnia and Herzegovina and among the first settlers in South Central Europe.

For millennia, these natives lived in harmony until foreign tribes crossed Bosnia and Herzegovina's mountains and rivers and pulled the locals into power struggles. Waves of invading tribes made their way to or through Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the triumphant claiming rule over the territory and its people, and in many cases, fabricating history to suit their needs. After centuries of foreign rule, a native Bosnian family came to power in the form of the regal house of *Kotromanić*. This dynasty, emblematic of the nation's sovereignty, gave a sense of identity to the population. It was succeeded by Hungarians, Ottomans, Austrians, Yugoslav Royalists and Communists.

In the 1990's, the Communist state that subsumed Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Socialist Federated Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY or just Yugoslavia), collapsed, and nearly all of its republic states separated. The Yugoslav army, *Jugoslavenska Narodna Armija* (JNA), was coopted by leadership from Serbia and Montenegro to wage war against the very states that paid to build and maintain it as the fourth largest military force in Europe—states the JNA was sworn to protect.

In its war of aggression against the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the 1990s, the JNA was supported by many Orthodox Christians, who formed militias within the country, to carve out a state that they could join with Serbia and Montenegro—something they called "Greater Serbia." The JNA and the local militias committed genocide, mass rape, torture and other atrocities.

Less than a year after the start of hostilities by the JNA, Croatia began manipulating Bosnian and Herzegovinian Catholics to separate and carve out a region that could be annexed by Croatia.

The war initiated by Serbia and Montenegro against seceding republics, and the subsequent war initiated by Croatia against Bosnia and Herzegovina, turned to unexpected outcomes when the Bosnian and Herzegovinian army (*Armija Republika Bosna i Hercegovina, Armija RBiH*), pushed back the frontlines and began to threaten the territorial grip that each of the neighboring nations coveted. The Croatians quickly created an alliance with the Bosnians and Herzegovinians as they saw an opportunity to repel Serb forces from their own territory in Croatia. Armija RBiH was backed by airpower from member states of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). After intense NATO air bombardment, the United States compelled Serbia to a cease fire and struck a peace deal between all three nations that was finalized in Dayton, Ohio. This deal is known as the "General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina." It is also referred to as "the Dayton Accords," or just "Dayton." Since the formal signing of the Dayton Accords in 1995 in Paris, France, Bosnia and Herzegovina's neighbors have not attacked it militarily; however, they persist in other tactics to destabilize and disrupt the country, stall economic, social and political progress, social and take positions to justify their hostile actions during the war and hide or protect those convicted or indicted for war crimes. To better understand these events, we must look at the history of the people and neighbors of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Early Humans

Map showing early migration of modern humans into Europe. Genetics and anthropology tell us that humans migrated to Europe through North Africa, the Middle East, Anatolia (Turkey), and the Balkans (6 Atlas). *At least one wave of this early human migration into Europe took place directly through Bosnia and Herzegovina. Other waves of migrations went around the Black Sea into Moravia. There were also waves of migrations into Spain from Africa across the Strait of Gibraltar, which was probably much narrower and shallower along the Camarinal Sill before the last ice age. The Camarinal Sill is a threshold separating the Atlantic Ocean from the Mediterranean Sea. During the ice age, Europe's seas were approximately 100 meters below today's levels.*

Approximately 150,000 years ago, numerous species that resemble humans (known as *hominins*) made their way out of Africa, and began a journey towards Australia, Asia, and Europe (6 Atlas). Hominins had characteristics comparable to modern humans, but earlier species of hominins differed in some significant ways. Many were skeletally different, some were physically larger, others had different shaped skulls and brains, some had protruding jaws and varied facial features that differentiated them from modern humans.

Bosnia and Herzegovina's winter mountain tops give a glimipse of what ice age tundra might have looked like.

There were many species of hominins, and over time, the earlier types diminished in numbers until they became extinct. Whether the species of hominins have ancestor-descendant relations is not clear. However, scientists generally agree that the lineage of the species places them in some chronological order, with some species overlapping the existence of previous or predecessor species.

One of the last of these predecessors is Neanderthal, which became extinct after the appearance of anatomically modern humans. Neanderthal is called *predecessor* simply because it preceded anatomically modern humans, not necessarily because of some evolutionary relationship.

Neanderthal remains have been found in Africa, Asia, Australia, and Europe, marking the extent of the territory they travelled. DNA testing shows modern humans outside of sub-Saharan Africa to have some common genetic markers with Neanderthal *hominins* (7 Sánchez-Quinto).

Creationists' Prespectives

Mainstream Judeo-Christian-Islamic theologies (doctrines that belong to Judaism, Christianity and Islam) accept the existence of species such as Neanderthal and the migration of hominins in history. Denominations that do not accept these findings tend to adhere to strictly literal interpretations of religious texts (8 National).

Archeological investigations in Bosnia and Herzegovina indicate that the population of hominins in Bosnia was relatively dense during the middle and upper Paleolithic eras (2 Fekeža). During that period, Neanderthals, and another group known as Denisovans, roamed between Asia and Europe. It is possible that isolated groups of these early hominins wandered into the Pannonian region in the northern parts of Bosnia (2 Fekeža) and survived there as prehistoric nomads.

DEFINITIONS

Hominins *are species that resemble humans in many physical and cultural characteristics* (9 Wood). *Commonly known hominins include Australopithecus, Denisovans, Neanderthals, Homo erectus and Homo sapiens. The hominin group includes anatomically-modern humans.* ***Modern humans*** *are classified as Homo sapiens. In contrast, Neanderthals are classified as Homo neanderthalensis.*

Nucleotides *are organic bio-molecules that form groups of nucleic acid building blocks, such as deoxy-ribonucleic acid or DNA, and ribonucleic acid or RNA* (10 Alberts).

Single nucleotide polymorphism *(SNP) is a variation in a nucleotide that occurs at a specific position within the* ***genome****, or genetic material* (11 Nature).

Archeology *is the study of human history and prehistory through excavations, and the analysis of remains and artifacts* (12 Renfrew). ***Anthropology*** *is the study of human societies and culture, and their development and ecology* (13 Haviland).

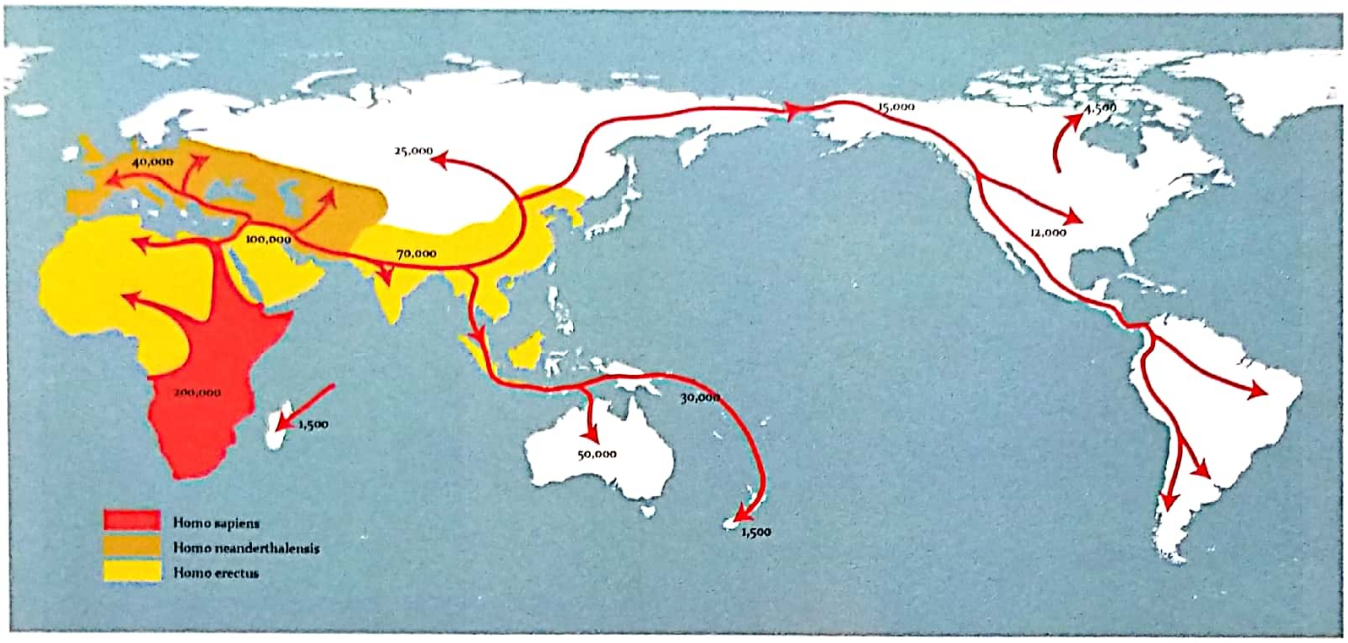
The ***last ice age****, also known as the last glacial maximum, began 24,500 years ago, when parts of earth were covered in ice and snow. About 20,000 years ago, the ice reached a maximum when kilometer-high sheets of ice covered the earth and changed the climate, sea levels, and availability of food. When that happened, the animals migrated or perished, and people could not survive in the cold or without food. Across most of Europe, the ice started melting gradually about 18,000 years ago* (14 Clark).

A ***haplogroup*** *is a classification of genetic lineages of modern human beings, dating to a common ancestor* (15 Cox). *The paternal ancestor is known in scientific and theological contexts as "Adam." Similarly, the common ancestor to the maternal lineage is known as "Eve." Scientists distinguish Biblical Eve from Evolutionary Eve* (16 Sykes).

A ***clade*** *is a group of organisms that consists of a common ancestor and its descendants, like a "branch" in the hierarchy of descendants* (17 Dupuis). *A subgroup of a clade is a* ***sub-clade.***

Historical linguistics *(also known as* ***diachronic linguistics****) is the study of languages over long periods of time* (18 Banyon). *This discipline helps determine the prehistory of languages, their relationships and impact on descendant and peer languages. Historical linguistics is different from the subject we commonly refer to as* ***linguistics****, which is the study of human speech, including its form, structure, nature and modifications that may have been made to it* (19 Radford).

First Humans in the World



Map depicting early human migration. Red path indicates modern human routes.

About 45,000 years ago, species that succeeded older hominins, known as Homo sapiens, made their way to various parts of the world. In Europe, the earliest remains of these hominins have been found in a few places including Greece (16 Sykes), Italy (20 Benazzi), and the United Kingdom (21 Higham). These direct ancestors of anatomically-modern humans migrated to Europe following many routes from Africa, among which, one was the Balkan corridor that traced a path through Bosnia-Herzegovina (2 Fekeža). Archeological evidence has been found at many locations along the Sava River, which indicates that numerous groups of hominins traveled along the river on both sides of its banks.

Genetic scientists categorize anatomically modern humans into alphabetized groups known as genetic clades. The clades of humans who migrated to Europe are assigned the alphabets G-H-I-J-K-R-N and U (3 Semino). Ancestors with these genetic clades spawned nearly all of Europe's human population. A subgroup of the I-clade (I1b) came to Bosnia and Herzegovina (22 Marjanović) and settled there. Two subgroups of the R clade (R1a and R1b) and a different subgroup of the I-clade made their way to the Pyrenees mountains and a region around Ukraine (23 Underhill, 24 Myres). These groups are classified as European natives. Members of the R1b group and the other I-subclade later migrated to Scandinavia. The R1a group scattered from Ukraine to areas around the Black Sea. However, the I1b-subclade remained mostly in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the favorable climate and abundance of food sources were key factors in retaining the otherwise nomadic, native population.

A genetic study completed in 2004 tells us that at least one clade or subgroup of haplogroup-I, travelled south along the Dinaric Alps into present-day Bosnia and Herzegovina (1 Rootsi).

This study shows that the highest concentration of this native European clade can be found in the present era within the borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Therefore, it is probable that at least one wave of tribes of these early humans journeyed through Bosnia and Herzegovina and has remained there since.

An earlier study, from 2000, tells us that a genetic marker, known as the P37 Single Nucleotide Polymorphism (SNP), was present in the Balkans prior to the last ice age (25 Rootsi STR). The best indicator of this marker rests in the diversity found in the same study among Bosnians and Herzegovinians.

Analyzing the studies from 2004 and 2000, it becomes clear that humans, who are considered native Europeans, journeyed through Bosnia and Herzegovina before the last ice age, and their descendants returned to take refuge there as the ice age reached its maximum.

Europe's natives became Bosnia's natives. Bosnians and Herzegovinians are among Europe's natives. Their descendants are also natives of Europe.

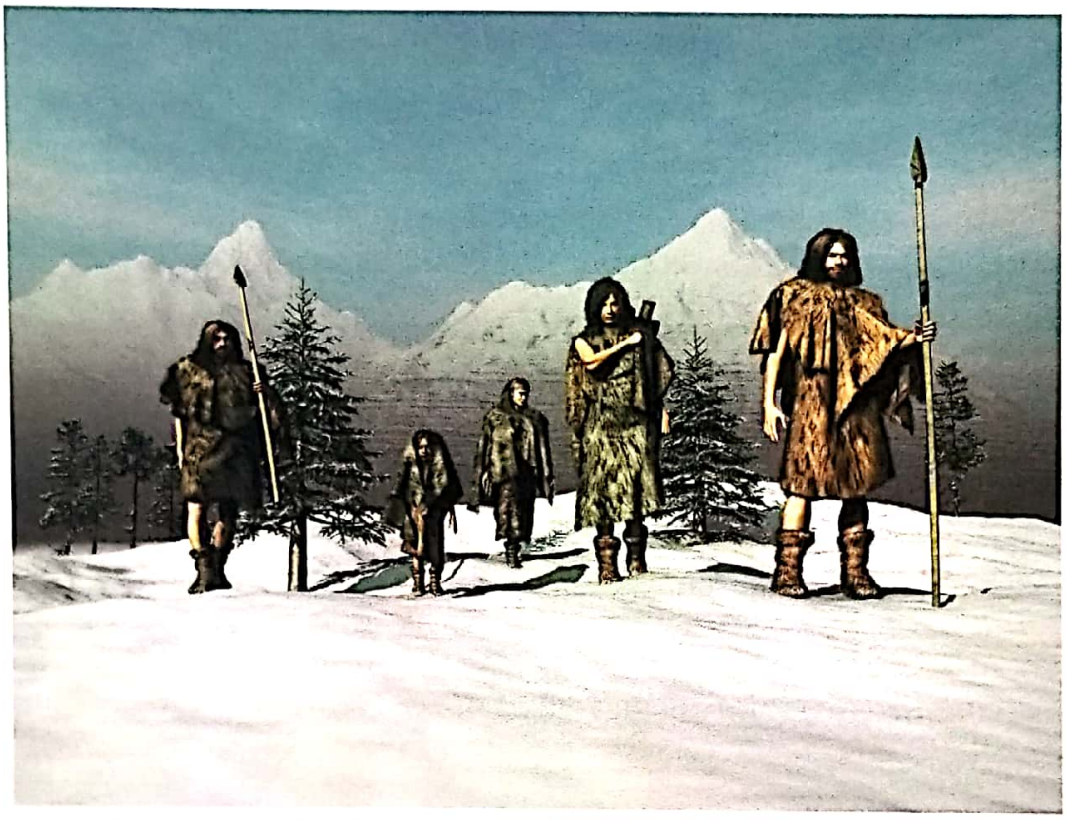
CLADES & SUBCLADES

In genetic science, a clade is a group or branch with a genetic makeup that consists of a common ancestor and all its lineal or direct descendants. The clade represents a single "branch" on the "tree of descendants" of that common ancestor. Genetic science looks at common ancestors, which could be individuals, communities, an entire population, or even a species, including those that might be extinct.

In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, nearly the entire early population of what is now the modern country is classified as a common ancestor of one group of European natives. As such, Bosnians and Herzegovinians belong to a native clade.

By their nature, clades are nested, where one clade is subsumed within another, as each branch within that clade splits into multiple branches. The splits in branches form clades known as subclades which reflect evolutionary history, especially as populations diverge or change genetically and independently of each other. Clades are referred to as *monophyletic*, meaning that all the branches within the clade are considered one clan or group. The organization of genetic markers using the cladistic approach has changed the science of biological classification, and uncovered evolutionary relationships that were previously concealed.

First Humans in Bosnia



Artist's impression of early Europeans escaping the ice age. Image: Shutterstock.

Our understanding of the routes travelled by prehistoric humans is being reshaped by genetic science. In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, studies tie key genetic markers among the population to findings from nearby archeological digs. Archeology from the region of Moravia in the Czech Republic (26 Wild), and in Peştera cu Oase, near the Iron Gates in Romania (27 Trinkaus) tell us that humans journeyed through that region just before the last ice age, about 25,000 years ago. Evidence and artifacts from these sites tell us that these people were amongst the earliest anatomically modern humans in Europe.

During the ice age, we know from geology that the northern parts of Europe were uninhabitable (28 Mithen). About two-thirds of the continent was buried under glacial mountains of ice and snow. Vegetation had been completely buried; trees were engulfed under snow that banked kilometers high. Wildlife and game ran off or succumbed to the harsh cold conditions.

Humans in Europe escaped the frigid conditions and made their way to one of three refuge areas: the Pyrenees in France and Spain (29 O'Hara), an area at the Black Sea in Ukraine, and a refuge area in the Balkans (22 Marjanović). These three refuge areas spawned three distinct genetic classifications of native Europeans, known as haplogroups R1b, R1a and I sub-types (22 Marjanović) respectively.

Last Ice Age

The last ice age, which occurred between 24,500 and 17,000 BCE, resulted in the formation of a thick sheet of ice across much of Europe.

Colder temperatures forced wildlife to migrate in search of milder climates; nomadic humans followed. Research in genetics tells us that Europeans escaped the cold in three waves (22 Marjanović).

There are indications that one wave journeyed west towards the Pyrenees Mountains between France and Spain (26 O'Hara), another trekked east towards Ukraine, and the third migrated southward, along Bosnia's Dinaric Alps (1 Rootsi, 23 Underhill).

Settling in the protected valleys of the Dinaric Alps, this third group constitutes one of the earliest known human tribes in Europe (30 Underhill).

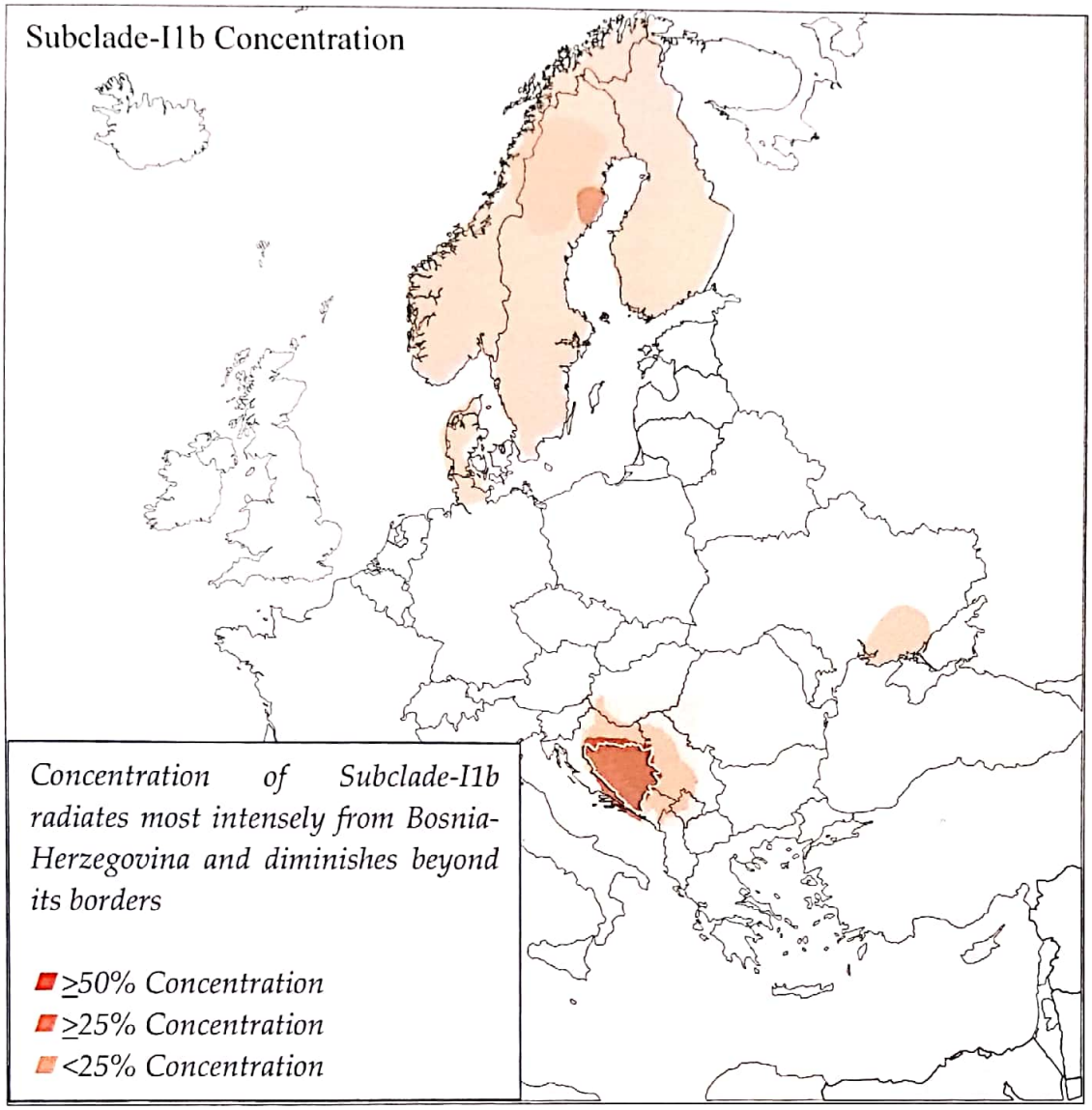
Waves of exodus during the Ice Age when a group of anatomically-modern humans in Central Europe went in three directions. One group ended up around the Ukraine, another in the Pyranees, and the third in southern Bosnia and Herzegovina.

A genetic study reveals that the concentration of genetic markers specific to this early European tribe is highest in Bosnia and Herzegovina, even today, compared to the rest of Europe. This tells us that a group of people, *genetic subclade I*, who were tribally affiliated, lived in the region (1 Rootsi).

The study shows that outside of Bosnia and Herzegovina there are diminished concentrations of this subclade. As you go beyond Bosnia and Herzegovina's borders, you find fewer people in this subclade (31 Marjanović). **That tells us this group formed a community that remained in Bosnia and Herzegovina and was genetically different than others outside their borders.**

The people of Bosnia and Herzegovina were secluded from the waves of invading tribes, yet they had to adapt to the exposed winter conditions to remain in their villages year-round. Europeans of that era, which is known as the *interglacial period*, developed tools and practices to cope with severe climate as the ice age ended (32 Hoffecker).

To survive the ice age, Bosnians, like their European counterparts, learned to work hides into tightly sewn, tailored clothing (33 Ice). They had hearths for fires, traps for animals, and underground pits to store food. That is how their communities survived.


Subclade-I1b Concentration
Concentration of Subclade-I1b radiates most intensely from Bosnia-Herzegovina and diminishes beyond its borders
≥50% Concentration
≥25% Concentration
<25% Concentration

Map showing concentration of native genetic Subclade-I1b concentration in central Europe [25 Rootsi]. *Haplotype diversity values were calculated according to a mathematical model and haplotype frequencies where more than five Y chromosomes were found belonging to the I1b subclade* [34, 35 Nei].

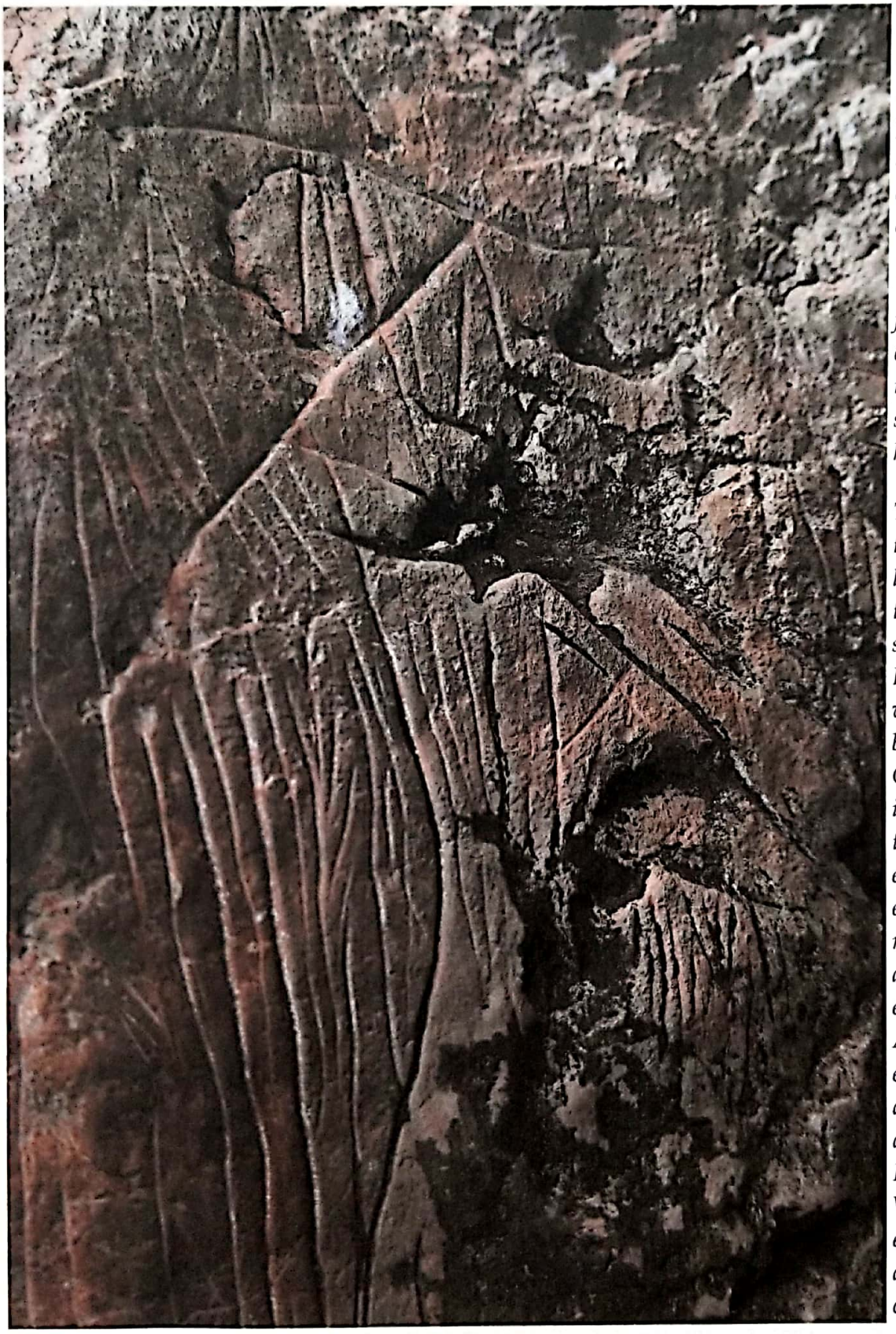
The highest concentration of this subclade occurs in Bosnia and Herzegovina and diminishes beyond its borders, a clear indication that Bosnia and Herzegovina was a glacial refuge where a native European population settled [31 Marjanović]. Studies also show that Bosnians and Herzegovinians did not migrate in significant numbers out of their region [36 Fu]. It shows that other tribes and races settled in the surrounding region but were mostly not successful in assimilating the Bosnian and Herzegovinian people [25 Rootsi]. Bosnia and Herzegovina's topology provided sufficient isolation that it allowed the natives to stay within their territory, while presenting adequate deterrence to encourage outsiders to look for travel paths around Bosnia and Herzegovina. Simply put, it was easier to travel around than to go through Bosnia and Herzegovina.

PALEOLITHIC ERA

The banks of a nearly dried Bregava River near Pećina Badanj, one of the earliest Paleolithic settlements in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Photo © 2017 Irfan Mirza.

Paleolithic era carvings on a rock at Pećina Badanj, a cave in the village of Borojevići near the Bosnian town of Stolac, are signs that European tribes settled there between 16,000 and 12,000 BCE (37 Lovrenović, 38 Basler). The carvings on the rock indicate two societies (38 Basler) that hunted locally over an extended period, meaning they were no longer nomads.

These tribes hunted in one locale, which places them amongst Europe's earliest settlers. The geography of the region tells us the tribes thrived on the banks of the Bregava River, a region that was rich with fish, wild fruit and herbs. A second set of carvings tell us that another settlement formed later in the same location. The second society followed the artistic traditions of the earlier inhabitants. They likely had similar religious beliefs and customs, indicating ***temporal endurance***, a process that describes how a social structure continues over time. While some analysis indicates the site at Badanj was only occupied for a few months in the year (39 Official), it is likely an indication of seasonal inhabitance. Similar settlements have been uncovered in the nearby caves of Crvena Pećina and Drenovačko (39 Official), all in proximity to each other.



A photograph of the engravings at Pećina Badanj. This photo is recent and shows a polished area of rock with engravings.

The engravings are from the Paleolithic era and portray an image of a horse or similar animal hunted with arrows.

The remainder of the engravings are likely a depiction of the meandering sinews of the Bregava River, which flows just below the cliff. Other interpretations of the winding engravings are an early form of rudimentary or abstract artistic expression. Archeologists estimate the drawing was damaged during the Paleolithic era. Weather and erosion are still degrading its condition.

Photo © 2017 Irfan Mirza.

The proximity of these settlements and the archeological findings are enough to conclude that these communities came together as prehistoric *neighborhoods*. *Neighborhoods* were local communities that enabled intensive face-to-face social interaction within a larger geographical area that served as an administrative unit (40 Smith). These *neighborhoods* didn't just come together coincidentally because groups of humans settled near natural resources. These neighborhoods were intentional and served a meaningful purpose. They provided structure for community and contributed to economic growth, collective security, and productive industry and agriculture. They encouraged collaboration and shared tribal knowledge, among other benefits. Based on archeological dating, these neighborhoods could be among the first in the Balkans, and possibly on Europe's continental mainland.

By taking up residence in these prehistoric neighborhoods, the early inhabitants of Bosnia and Herzegovina established the means to collaborate, while ensuring the survival of the other cave settlements if one of them were overrun by invaders. Each of the cave settlements relied on topographic features, such as overhanging cliffs to protect their backs, dugouts for defense against frontal attack, and proximity to each other for mutual protection (38 Basler).

Bosnia and Herzegovina's early settlements were not haphazard. Their locations were part of a defensive strategy. N***eighborhoods*** were found in northern Bosnia, at Kamen and Londa in Makljenovac (38 Basler), at Kadar between the towns of Slavonski Brod and Posavina, at Luščić, along the Vijaka River at Prnjavor, along the Usora River south of Doboj, at Zobište north of Doboj, and at Klašnice along the Vrbas north of Banja Luka, among other locations.

Bosnia's *neighborhoods* continued through Paleolithic times into the Neolithic era. This was proven by archeological digs in the Bosanska Gradiška area near Kočićeva (41 Vander) and Donja Dolina (42 Mihaljević). These findings indicate the periodic presence of hominins as early as the period of Neanderthals, with more continuous settlements just before and after the ice age (43 Montet-White). Sites at Rastuša in Herzegovina, Okolište, and Obre also revealed ***neighborhoods***.

Archeological studies along the watershed of the Sava River indicate at least 65 sites on the southern flank where settlements were established prior to the ice age (38 Basler), followed by sporadic transient occupation during the interglacial period (43 Montet-White). Once the harsh conditions of the ice age diminished, humans returned to these settlements along the Bosna and Ukrina rivers (43 Montet-White), and near the salt deposits at Tuzla, where it is likely they settled permanently.

More than 50 sites in the region (43 Montet-White) have presented assemblages that were superimposed on each other, demonstrating how busy this corridor became for ancient tribes that continually resided at or near these sites within Bosnia-Herzegovina.

PALEO INDO-EUROPEAN LANGUAGE

Studies in historical linguistics tell us that Bosnia and Herzegovina's early settlers spoke a dialect rooted in the Paleolithic Indo-European (44 Simmons) family of languages. These Indo-European languages are considered parents to European languages of that era (45 Gray). A branch dialect within this root family is known as Proto-Baltic (46 Beekes). Another dialect of the era is the closely related Proto-Slavic (47 Balto-Slavic). A more accurate name for it is Proto-Slavonic (48 Ivanov). The Slavic form of languages and the group known as Slavs did not come into existence until thousands of years later. By labelling the Paleolithic *proto language* as Slavic, a false assumption was unintentionally propagated about the origins of Slavs, or the attribution of the Slavonic languages to them.

Several millennia before the Slavs appeared on the scene, the Paleolithic European natives who migrated to Bosnia and Herzegovina splintered from a larger group of Europeans who had come together before the ice age. There were at least two distinct groups who spoke variations of a proto language called Balto-Slavonic (49 Kortland). These groups separated and went in different directions.

Genetics show that Baltic states have populations that are dominated with R1a (50 Underhill) and N3 (51 Derenko) markers and negligible I1b. These markers define one or more groups that spoke predecessor languages of modern Baltic. In contrast, Bosnians and Herzegovinians have predominantly I1b with little R1a and almost no N3 markers, which identifies a different group whose ancestors spoke a predecessor language of modern Bosnian.

The Bosnian branch of the Proto-Slavonic language was the language of native Bosnians and Herzegovinians before Slavs came on the scene as a collective group (52 Barford). The language was absorbed by a warrior group known as early or Proto Avars, also Avar. The Avar came to Bosnia and Herzegovina, where they picked up the local language. Scholars believe they spread it across their *Khaganate* (empire) (53 Curta), after which it became the language of the Serbs and Croats.

There is much political contention about the origins of the Bosnian language. Serbia and Croatia each claim authority over it, while Serbia claims its origins. However, the fact that genetic science has verified that Bosnians and Herzegovinians are descendants of European natives from the Paleolithic era, sheds new light on the origins of the language, overturning Serbia's claims.

Paleolithic tribes in Bosnia and Herzegovina spoke a proto language that is the root of Bosnian Slavonic (47 Balto-Slavic). The modern descendant of that language is called by various names, including *bosanski* (Bosnian), *srpski* (Serbian), *hrvatski* (Croatian), *srpsko-hrvatski* (Serbo-Croatian), or *bosansko-srpsko-hrvatski* (Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian). Politics differentiate these dialects into distinct languages.

Linguistic absorption and reacquisition

Historical linguistics teaches that language expansion does not always result from genetic domination. For example, Latin expanded in Western Europe without Roman genes necessarily dominating that part of the continent (54 Rauch). Similarly, Chinese expanded through affinity across a diverse genetic pool of ethnic groups (55 Sun). In the same way, we can draw extrapolations to Bosnian Slavonic, which expanded in pre-hostoric times, even though the process of how that language reached new populations isn't documented.

However, the model and patterns of expansion are likely similar and can be corroborated with observed data about Bosnian speakers, such as genetic dating of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian population, anthropology, and linguistic inferences.

Through the analysis of Latin expansion, we can begin to understand how shifts of small populations can submerge otherwise dominant languages (54 Rauch), without one group genetically dominating the make up of the other (55 Sun). For example, when the Visigoth invaded Hispania, they had already been Romanized from their time in the Roman Empire, but they retained their own language. However, by the time they established their kingdom in Toledo (modern-day Spain), they abandoned their own language and absorbed Latin (54 Rauch). So, this is a well-known example of newcomers acquiring a language that was already established in a region. Western European groups, such as the Celtics and Iberians, switched to Latin because Latin became a 'lingua franca,' the language of the people.

In general, populations learn or acquire languages either because it is advantageous, or because the language is imposed upon them. In both cases, the newcomers to the language typically acquire the vocabulary and the syntax of the new language. At the same time though, they continue to use the phonology of the submerged language. This blend gives rise to variations that result in competitive dialects. Usually, one of the dialects gains political or economic mass, and is then thrust forward as the national norm. That dialect is then reacquired or imposed back over the local dialects. This is yet another indicator of how Bosnian Slavonic was absorbed by the newcomer South Slavs. It was then thrust as 'lingua franca' by the Old Slavonic Church, which gave the Church-adopted dialect critical mass. This dialect was then reabsorbed by the populations within the span of influence of the Church.

Groups such as the South Slavs embraced the Bosnian Slavonic dialect in its entirety; wheras other groups, such as the Bulgarians and the Macedonians, embellished it with their own variation, creating competing dialects. Some syntax from those dialects made its way back into Bosnian.

The Slavonic and Baltic proto languages were together at one point in history (46 Beekes). We know this because they share traits that tell us they had common linguistic development. These traits are not found in other European languages. We also know from genetic markers of people who speak modern dialects of these languages that the groups came together after the last ice age, and they went through a period of common development before parting from each other.

The basis of their parting is not known, but their directions of travel were likely a result of ***linguistic affinity***, which is a group's desire to stay together due to knowledge of a common language or dialect (56 Gatschet).

The affinity of the Proto-Slavonic speakers helped members of this group develop kinship and durable bonds. Similarly, Proto-Baltic speakers formed bonds of their own. So, when these groups decided to part ways, their members had enough empathy for their own groups that they stayed with their own linguistic groups during the split.

Once speakers of the Bosnian Slavonic language settled, the long and gradual process of linguistic development, transference, and expansion began. **Some of the tribes speaking Bosnian Slavonic settled in the territory of modern-day Bosnia and Herzegovina. From that base, they shared the language with nearly everyone who came there or passed through.** The most significant factor in the spread of the Bosnian Slavonic dialect were the early Christian churches. The most impactful of these churches is known as the Old Slavonic Church, which absorbed the language and spread it throughout the region.

Eastern Herzegovinian Phonology

As proto Bosnian Slavonic was becoming a standard language, local dialects took shape within the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina as early as Paleolithic times.

With countless tribes and invaders marching through Bosnia and Herzegovina, some local dialects disappeared, while others, like the Eastern Herzegovinian, emerged as the dominant dialect of the people.

Linguists, who are not predisposed to political bias, universally agree that Eastern Herzegovinian forms the dialectical basis for all modern phonology of Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian and Montenegrin literary standards.

The modern version of the Eastern Herzegovinian dialect covers a large territory that includes Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Slovenia, making it the most widespread subdialect of the Neo-Shtokavian Bosnian Slavonic dialect (57 Sussex).

- *Indo-European*
  - *Proto Slavonic*
    - *Slavonic*
      - *Bosnian Slavonic*
        - *Eastern Herzegovinian*
          - *Bosnian*
          - *Croatian*
          - *Serbian*
          - *Montenegrin*

Neo-Shtokavian

This photograph of engravings at Pećina Badanj shows a set of markings that date to a second settlement around the cave. These engravings stylistically mimic the earlier etchings and have been intentionally inscribed adjacent to them on the same rock. The inscriptions indicate a form of artistic and linguistic expression.

At a minimum, the engraginvs indicate continuity of ideology and culture from the earlier engravings.

The engravings depict some patterns that resemble human stick figures carved out of a maze of vertical lines.

A group of lines in the lower right could depict a person perched on the back of an animal, perhaps a rider of a long-necked creature such as a horse possibly wielding a spear.

The lines delineating humans show groupings in superior and inferior positions. The human or humans in the superior position are on a diagonal to one in an inferior position. This could be an indication of tribal or ancestral bonds between the two societies. Much of the parts of the rock that could depict human heads in both positions have been chipped off or otherwise damaged, leaving only lines that depict torsos and arms for speculation. When compared to the previous engravings, this set could be an indication to future generations of how the society developed from hunting horses or horse-like animals to riding or domesticating them.

Photo © 2017 Irfan Mirza.

Which language came first, Bosnian, Serbian or Croatian?

The languages of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its neighbors have been the subject of historical manipulation to the point that common sense and logic have been lost in the debates and arguments. An effective way to understand the origins of the region's languages is by looking at the people and the timelines of their arrival. We also need to look at whether one people assimilated another, as that might be a way that their language could have been transferred.

Two groups of European natives came together just after the ice age. Each of the groups spoke a different language, but both languages were close branches of the Indo-European proto language. One of the groups spoke ***Proto-Slavonic*** *and the other* ***Proto-Baltic****. Both proto languages had enough in common that their members could communicate with each other, possibly using hand gestures. These two groups spent quite a bit of time together. We know this because their languages developed some common traits—traits that cannot be found in other European languages. We also know the tribes parted company because their dialects later evolved separately. Each language group developed constructs that reflected its challenges with geography, societal evolution, spiritual shifts, and social stratification, among others.*

We know the Proto-Baltic group travelled eastward, and the Proto-Slavonic group went south, towards Bosnia and Herzegovina. These people are among Europe's natives, and their ancestral language is a root from which other dialects were formed. This root language descended from Proto-Slavonic into three branches: Western Slavonic, Eastern Slavonic, and Southern Slavonic. Each is a proto-language that spawned other languages such as the predecessors of modern-Bosnian, which led to the creation of the Southern Bosnian Slavonic dialect used by the Old Slavonic Church.

Linguists, historians, and politicians continue to debate the origins of modern-day Serbian, Croatian, and Bosnian. The fact that the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina carry an extraordinarily strong genetic marker that dates their ancestors back to the last ice age, and subsequently Paleolithic times, leads to the only conclusion possible, that the Bosnian people had a language well before the other two groups were formed.

While there were tribes that lived in the area currently occupied by all three groups, it has not been demonstrated that those tribes formed into Serbian or Croatian ethnicities. However, the continuity of the Paleolithic tribes in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been demonstrated by the presence of their genetic markers among modern-day Bosnians and Herzegovinians. Some Croatians living closer to Bosnia's borders, such as those in southern Slavonia and Istrija, also have the same genetic markers. These groups had common ancestral genes, and they shared a language that they inherited from their Paleolithic ancestors in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The language of these natives was spread across the region by a warrior race known as the Avar, who carried it throughout their Khaganate (kingdom). Centuries later, the Old Slavonic Church adopted the Bosnian language to appeal to the local masses, as the Church evangelized its mission and grew its followers. That is how Serbians and Croatians acquired their language.

The Bosnian language had to come first.

MESOLITHIC ERA

Rendering of an early human settlement along a river bank, a typical scene in Europe during the Mesolithic era. Temporary encampments allowed tribes to move when needed. Activities included drying of animal hides, open pit roasting of game, and collection of berries. Image © Department of Communities, N. Ireland, UK; Philip Armstrong, Larne, N. Ireland.

During the Mesolithic era, between 9,500 and 7,500 BCE, Europe's ice-age glaciers were on their way to *receding*. Geology tells us the glaciers began melting from the south, making it appear as if the southernmost tips of the glaciers were "retreating" or *receding* in a northerly direction. The glaciers were shrinking. The melting ice brought dramatic changes to geology and climate, resulting in corresponding changes in availability and location of food sources (58 Gavashelishvili, 31 Hoffecker). Wildlife returned to areas where temperatures became milder. Glacial outwash created concentrated alluvial deposits that mixed with organic materials, resulting in ideal conditions for agriculture.

Most European cultures adapted and reacted to post-glacial era climate and geographical changes through rapid developments in materials and tools (59 Fagan). They hunted across wider territory, which reinforced their nomadic lifestyles and habits.

In contrast, pre-agricultural society in Bosnia-Herzegovina did not face the same pressures, largely due to their isolation from the major travel paths that spanned across Europe, and the local communities' desire to settle in persistent milder climate (60 Bailey). Thus, Bosnian society began forming settlements earlier than some other Mesolithic cultures.

Archeology shows Bosnians settled near rivers and transitioned from caves to wooden homes that were close to each other (37 Lovrenović,). Some homes were built in rows, on terraced hills, within planned residential areas. Some archeological digs uncovered homes built away from flood plains, indicating advanced knowledge of rising river levels, and demonstrating year-round living conditions. Clusters of homes were spaced apart in a way to suggest that common walkways existed between rows of homes. Many homes had courtyards that appear to be sized for family activities.

These courtyards are commonplace today in Bosnian and Herzegovinian homes where they are known as "*avlije.*" The development of homes in clusters was common in many areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina, distinguishing these communities as the earliest neighborhoods in the Balkans, and among the earlier neighborhoods on mainland Europe.

Archeological site at Okolište. The digs show the location or footprint of residential structures. Image from video footage.

Bosnia's early settlers had to establish ways of governing themselves (60 Bailey), and they had to create traditions to encourage collaboration. Some traditions were based on religious practices and rituals while others seemed to be intended to support a budding community. Because of the relative isolation of Bosnia and Herzegovina's valleys, population growth and survival depended entirely on activities that preserved family and community and provided defense under attack and invasion. As tribes settled in relatively isolated, yet habitable regions, they did not develop a sense of territorial protection beyond the immediate periphery of the land they occupied. However, they did engage in many communal activities. Archeology shows that Bosnia and Herzegovina's native residents spit-roasted game, dried animal hides, nuts and fruit, in a communal way. These activities helped establish traditions in the ancient culture. Many of these traditions are engrained into the culture of the current population of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Neolithic Era

This artifact is known as the Butmir culture pot. It is a national treasure of Bosnia-Herzegovina dating to the late Neolithic era. The pot is from a culture that is recognizable by the exquisite characteristics of its ceramic ware, including type of fabrication.

Neolithic artifacts dating between 5,500 and 4,500 BCE, discovered around Butmir, near present-day Sarajevo airport, tell us about a sophisticated society in the region. The artifacts consist of pottery known by archeologists as "Butmir vases" (61 Butmir). Butmir was one of three communities, along with Okolište (Visoko) and Obre (Kakanj) that likely had an integrated or closely dependent economy in the region. They had trade and relations with similar communities as far away as the Adriatic Sea (62 Butmir). They depended on each other for defense and possibly even provided refuge for each other in times of need.

Archeological findings in these areas reveal neighborhoods with rows of housing. Some of the homes ranged from 4 to 10 meters in length. They were anchored on durable, embedded wooden posts (63 Kujundžič-Vejzagič) in each corner, and protected by clay walls and thatched clay roofs.

Human figure from the late Neolithic Butmir culture. This preserved head reveals realism in sculpture. Archeologists are not certain if this form of sculpture gives an indication of racial features. However, the artifacts give a clear indication of how early Bosnian and Herzegovinian society expressed its understanding of art. The Butmir head sculpture is uncommon and original to Butmir. Photo: Zijah Gafić, courtesy of Zemaljski Muzej Bosne i Hercegovine, National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Research tells us while these communities were socially structured, they generally embraced egalitarian values where people enjoyed identical or relatively equal status (64 Müller-Scheeßel). They probably didn't have a king or other type of rulers, although there may have been religious heads. It is likely that within the home, there was some level of stratification, and we know that women were generally the heads of the house, as well as playing dominant leadership roles in the community.

The findings from these areas show the people likely had common beliefs (61 Butmir) and they had a level of self-governance. Many artifacts point to a focus on fertility. The substantial number of female figurines indicate how women were revered and protected in this culture. Other indicators show that women led this culture. This only makes sense since these communities were dependent on growth through birth and families.

The communities prospered from agriculture and animal husbandry. A mill found at the Butmir site (61 Butmir) tells of a culture where village folk could share in the harvest. Recurring themes and patterns from artifacts lead us to believe that artistic form was also shared. Similarly, we can infer their language evolved from proto-Slavonic, and it was enriched with vocabulary that included constructs of a settled society, not nomads.

Another artifact from Butmir known as the "Butmir bowl" dates to the Late Neolithic period, approximately 4800 BCE. The quality of this artifact serves as a testament to its manufacture, and the care with which it has been preserved over time. Photo: Zijah Gafić, courtesy of Zemaljski Muzej Bosne i Hercegovine, National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In the village of Lug, near Goražde, a figurine, and remnants of a settlement discovered in the 1950's, depict a woman, known as "Bogina Lug" or the "Goddess of Lug." The Neolithic era female figurine, dating between 5500 and 4400 BCE, is standing on short legs, symbolizing a settled society. Her hands are at waist, indicating authority. The figurine lends consistency to the role played by women in fertility cultures, such as this one in Bosnia's earliest settlements.

The figurine is made of grey ceramic and finished in a high polish. It represents a significant find that places the journey of the Lug ideology right through Bosnia-Herzegovina. Lug is a mythological reincarnation of the "mother goddess," from Sumaria (modern day southern Iraq), known as Tiamet. The culture of this "grand" maternal figure spread through Syria and Turkey, across Bosnia-Herzegovina, all the way to Ireland. Along the way, it changed gender and became the male God of the Druids. The religion of Lug is among the earliest identified religions in the civilized world, reaching Bosnia by the Neolithic period. When the Ilyr came to Bosnia, they embraced the fertility culture of Lug, except that in the Ilyr languages, they referred to the deities as Thana and Zana. The word Zana is expressed in Bosnian as "žena," meaning woman.

Bosnia and Herzegovina's fascination with Lug is apparent when you look at the many places that carry the goddess' name—Lug at Goražde, Lug at Tomislavgrad, Jesenica Lug at Trebinje, Velji Lug at Višegrad, Veliki Lug at Fojnica, Lug at Kiseljak, Jeginov Lug at Kalesija, Lug at Prozor-Rama near Bugojno, and Lug at Dervent, among others. Photo: Zijah Gafić, courtesy of Zemaljski Muzej Bosne i Hercegovine, National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The village site in Goražde, where the Goddess of Lug was discovered. This village area was likely a monastery or religious building where the early worshipers of the Goddess Tiamet could have gathered to perform rituals and religious ceremonies. The site is currently adjacent to a scrapyard and remains untended. As the place of origin of this early religious sect and practice in the region, it is important to note that this location likely predates the journey of this religion westward across Europe. By some standards, this location would be considered holy and worthy of preservation. Photo © 2018 Irfan Mirza.

Above: A 3,000 square meter plot of land where a Neolithic village was discovered near the village of Čajniče in Goražde, close to the site of the discovery of the Goddess of Lug. This site had about 70 homes on it, close to the Drina River, yet far enough away to circumvent flooding in the spring time. These villagers likely worshiped the Goddess of Lug and travelled the 2-kilometer journey to the Lug monastery. Photo: © 2018 Irfan Mirza.

A cylindrical pot discovered in the archeological dig at the site of Pod, near the town of Bugojno. This fine pottery vessel is distinctive with three flat handles. It is elaborately decorated with crosshatch markings, and geometric shapes, such as triangles and curved motifs of concentric circles, as well as woven, interlaced garlands. There is a high amount of symmetry with repetitive patterns. The pot dates to the late Bronze age, and is made of ceramic material, with a glaze finish.

The archeological dig revealed a hill fort on Mount Koprivnica, in Bugojno municipality. The site is one of the earliest indications of a defensive settlement in Bosnia and Herzegovina, dating to Neolithic times. Artifacts and findings from the site indicate it was inhabited over several periods, including Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age, and later, in times of proto-Ilyr and Ilyr tribes. Photo: Zijah Gafić, courtesy of Zemaljski Muzej Bosne i Hercegovine, National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Present day area of Okolište in Visoko. This parcel of land was excavated by an international group of archeologists in 2004. The land is protected by Bosnia and Herzegovina's Commission for the Preservation of National Monuments, so the owner of the property cannot build permanent structures on it. He is permitted to farm the land; however, he feels since this is such an important national archeological site, he has elected to preserve it even though he receives no compensation for it. Archeologists placed nylon sheets over the digs before covering them back with dirt in 2005. Photo © 2017 Irfan Mirza.

A view of the central Okolište lot back towards the main street. The archeological site was buried thousands of years ago due to increased rainfall, landslides, shifting soils from the surrounding hills, and freely growing vegetation and compost. This likely began to happen well after its inhabitants abandoned the site at the end of the Neolithic period. Photo © 2017 Irfan Mirza.

Gently undulating hill provided organic soil deposits ideal for farming. The land below this hill, just above Okolište, was likely farmed by Bosnia and Herzegovina's Neolithic natives. The hill and farmland slope ever so gently down to the Bosna River, which provides a source for irrigation and drainage. Photo © 2017 Irfan Mirza.

Archeologists placed a directional marker on a barn at the Okolište site. The marker serves as a reference point to locate the rich Neolithic artifacts and findings buried meters below the ground in the adjacent field. From this marker, measurements can be taken to mark the territory of the Okolište settlement. Photo © 2017 Irfan Mirza.

It is possible this road might have been among the first neighborhood streets in Europe, and highly likely one of the first in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This street extends directly past the findings at the Okolište site. The Okolište lot is the property of the #68 home shown in the picture. Photo © 2017 Irfan Mirza.

Early Bosnian Society

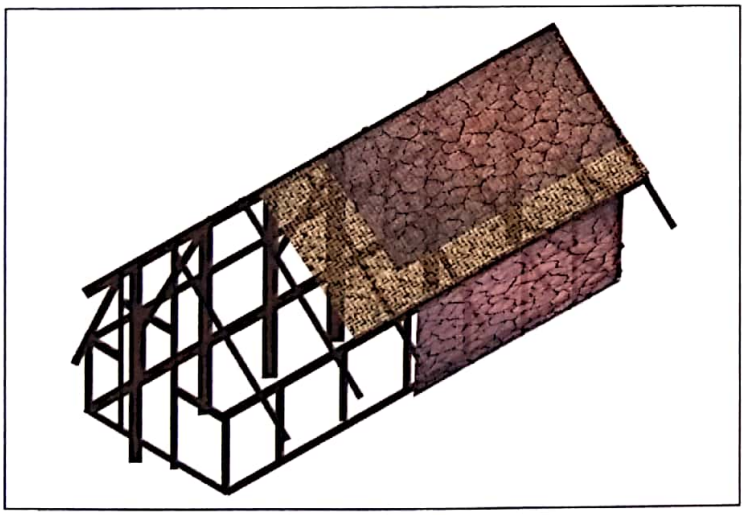
Archeological excavation in 1974 shows the foundation of an early wooden home in a community or neighborhood. Photo: Marija Gimbutas files, UCLA archives.

Bosnia's prehistoric artifacts and excavations in the areas of Butmir, Okolište and Obre, reveal that those communities were relatively autonomous. In other words, they governed themselves, yet they maintained a regional identity. The communities were large and sophisticated. They exchanged traditions and art with each other, and they engaged in trade with distant communities. Because of trade and travel, the language of the natives moved further away from the shared phonology and syntax of their former Proto-Baltic North European counterparts, morphing into a south-eastern vernacular, in a way forming a dialect unique to the region, something that could be identified as South-Eastern or Bosnian Slavonic.

Seashells found in archeological digs indicate trade with communities on the Adriatic coast. There is evidence that these Bosnian natives lived in the valleys during winters and moved to the mountains, during summers (64 Müller-Scheeßel). The natives constructed homes on hillsides and carved out tracts of land for agriculture. The hillside homes were used during the summers when the swealtering heat in the valleys was unbearable.

During winter months, when the cold and snow set in, the natives moved back down to the valleys. In this way, the hillside homes could be among Europe's first "cottage homes" or "*vikendice*" as they are known in Bosnia. There is also evidence that farming was moved or rotated along the Bosna River to Donji Meštro, an area close to Okolište, but with much better soil (65 Dreibrodt), enriched with organic and alluvial deposits. The ability to rotate crops or move agricultural activities between different tracts of land indicates sophisticated tribal knowledge about agriculture and ways to improve yield from the harvest.

***Right**: Archeological digs along the Vrbas River in central Bosnia and Herzegovina have uncovered Neolithic settlements and homes on stilts at Kočićevo (41 Vander) and Donja Dolina (42 Mihaljević,), two villages near Bosanska Gradiška, north of Banja Luka.*
Excavations from these sites give insight into the types of agriculture prevalent on this flood plain, including corn, millet, animal farming, and the collection of berries, such as Cornelian cherries ("drinjak"), a tradition carried on to this day in Bosnia-Herzegovina.



***Left**: Computer generated replica of a Neolithic home at Okolište. The building was supported by columns along a center ridge, an angled truss roof made of thatch, loomed fabric, and possibly clay. Side walls were made of clay and stone and were painted or decorated. This type of construction indicates an advanced culture where tribal members worked closely together to create such a complex, urbane community of homes. It also indicates formal social structure and communal practices. For such a community to thrive, they had to have amenities for children, and facilities to care for their animal herds. These Bosnian natives created female figurines indicating respect for their women, and they revered their dead indicating a cult devoted to its ancestry. They shared religious and artistic ideas with each other. Judging by the consistency of quality across all homes in the central site, this society was relatively egalitarian, meaning they lived equally with little to no stratification. There might have been religious or spiritual leadership, perhaps within the family, and best estimates are that religious rituals and practices were held both within the home and outside of it. Women carried leadership responsibilities in the tribe, setting social standards and expectations that ensured the security of the community.*

What do we know about Bosnia's Neolithic society?

Our current knowledge of Neolithic communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina stems from archeological digs. The findings are preserved by Bosnia and Herzegovina's Commission for the Preservation of National Monuments. Many documents relating to the findings are online on the government's public archives. The artifacts from the excavations are preserved in Bosnia and Herzegovina's museums, including the Zemaljski Muzej Bosne i Hercegovine, or National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo.

Many sites across Bosnia and Herzegovina have been uncovered telling of a flourishing Neolithic society that virtually spanned the territory, especially along the main thoroughfares and temperate valleys. Around Butmir, 36 sites have been excavated from that era.

The sites in Visoko radiate around a 7 ½ hectare (7,500 sq. meters) central development at Okolište that consisted of more than 200 homes, ranking it among the densest settlements of its type in Southeast Europe. The location and size of Okolište underscore the critical role of this site along the Bosna River. Geology tells us that the Bosna River flowed much closer to the settlement than it does today.

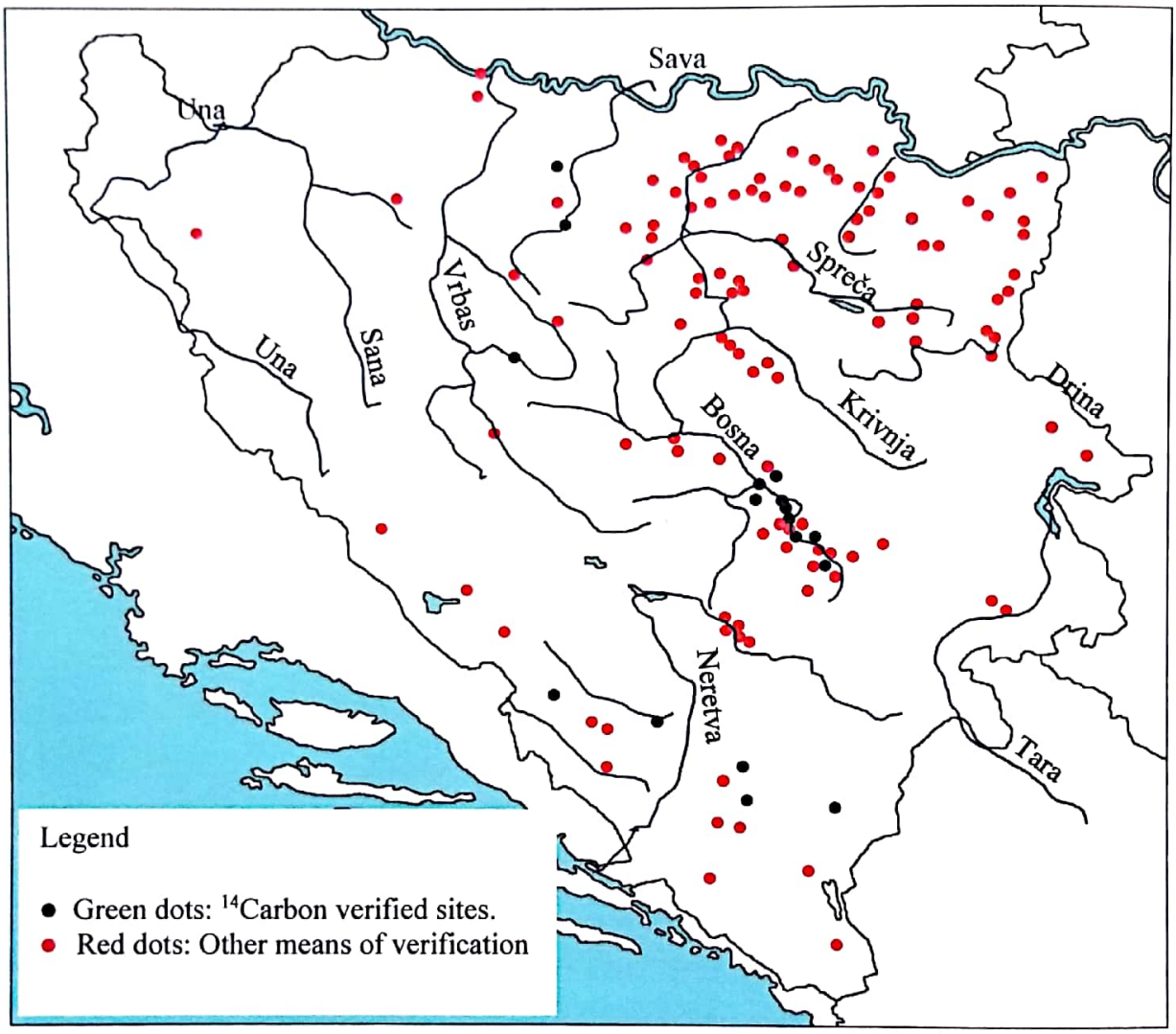
The surrounding land is organically rich and highly arable. Bosnia's Neolithic natives cleared forests to create land for agriculture and their settlements. There are plenty of pastures for animals to graze, and the settlers preserved enough forest to support a hunt that could be sustained for centuries. The natives constructed homes with trenches around them, providing for drainage, flood control, and protection against attacking tribes. Groups of homes had protective reinforcement surrounding them where the natives entombed their revered dead. It is reasonable to conclude that the reinforcements served as a physical deterrent to invaders while the dead were believed to protect against invading or offensive spirits.

The houses had hearths for heating and cooking. Some homes had workshops to manufacture tools, and mills to grind grains. A home in Okolište had a weaving loom, evidenced by the finding of loom weights. This tells us that weaving cloth, blankets, and rugs was probably an activity that was conducted seasonally. This is logical in that the woven fabric would come in handy during Bosnia's cold winters. In Okolište, an imprint of a woven fabric was found in the floor of one of the homes. Fabric could have also been used in roof lining, along with clay and other water-resistant material.

The Visoko basin was warmer in Neolithic times and rich with cherries, berries, hazelnuts, and wild grape seeds that the area's natives could easily gather. Seeds found in archeological sites give an indication of the agricultural practices of the natives who planted barley and millet. They also gathered various weeds that were consumed alongside summer cereals. The weeds were likely used for medicinal purposes. The natives' diet included legumes such as broad beans and lentils.

Through this detail, we can see the development of a sophisticated society that demanded governance, the rule of law, and social structure. Claims by scholars that these sites were transient can now be summarily dismissed, establishing the basis for a long-standing society of European natives, anchored in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Organic alluvial deposits and natural irrigation from the hills above make the land at Okolište idea for farming and communities. Archeological digs in this region turned up evidence of cattle, goats and sheep being raised by these natives. While there was a culture of agriculture and heavy dependency on farm animals, the digs also indicate the communities hunted elk, wild boar, and various forms of deer and bovidae such as chamois and goats. Photo © 2017 Irfan Mirza.



Map showing Neolithic sites in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Many sites have been verified using Carbon-dating techniques. Other sites have been examined through various means including archeological inspection and comparison of artifacts. The sites across Bosnia and Herzegovina establish a pattern of native settlement along the main riverways. They dispel previous claims that humans in Neolithic times only travelled sporadically through Bosnia and Herzegovina and explain how so many people in all parts of the country are descendants of European natives. The site markers do not necessarily indicate locations of towns or cities. Green dots indicate ^{14}Carbon verified sites. Red dots indicate other means of verification. Source: Multiple sources, author's analysis.

What became of Bosnia's Neolithic society?

Archeologists found a community at the central Okolište site, that expanded into nearby hills. The economy of this community was based on agriculture, trade, and barter, both within and outside their area. The residents of this community experienced a few natural disasters, such as floods and landslides, that affected some of their homes and neighborhoods. Clearing of hillside forests to accommodate homes and tracts of land for cultivation left the topology vulnerable to landslides in the event of heavy rainfalls. Archeological digs provide evidence of homes that were moved due to landslides. The homes were buried under dirt and silt from the hilltop, after they slid down to the river bank.

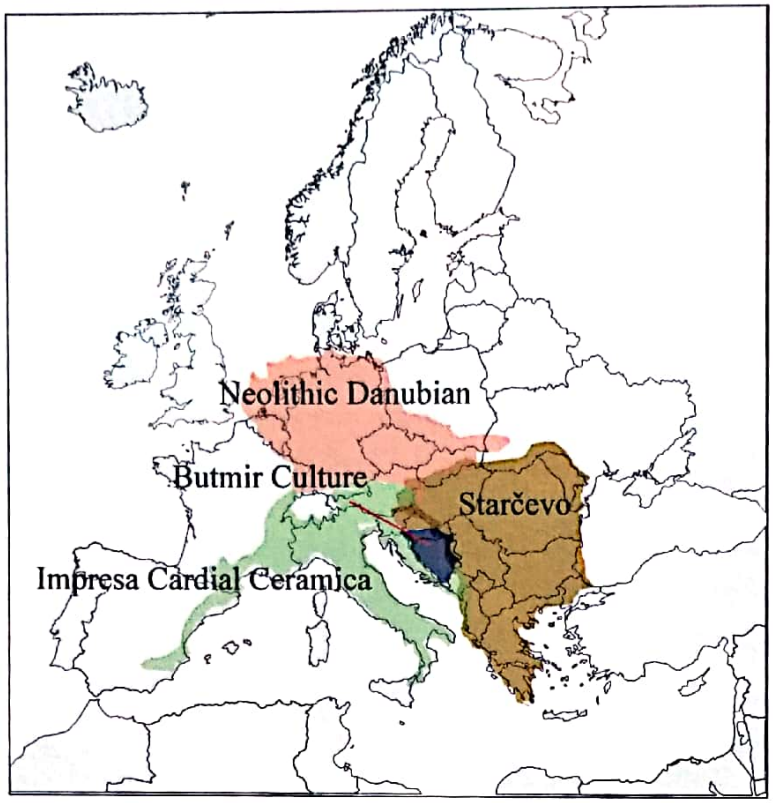
We know that some people, who were not affected by landslides, also evacuated their homes, in at least two waves. Some archeologists speculate that the evacuation was a result of economic disparity. However, they overlook that many homes were burned, in a manner that indicates malicious destruction. They also overlook that later settlers, such as those at Ribnjak near Gornji Meštro, about 6 km away, brought copper and forged metals in the Eneolithic era (a period between the Neolithic and Bronze Age, also known as the Copper Age). In this period, humans discovered that adding the right proportions of tin to copper makes a much harder metal alloy, called bronze, rendering armor and weapons more resilient and effective. When the copper findings are coupled with the fact that there were no indications of Bosnian natives having smelted or forged this alloy during that period, the possibility of foreign invaders floats as the most likely explanation.

We know there were incursions from Starčevo, an area in modern-day Serbia. In the first wave of attack, these invaders likely had some success, but were ultimately repelled by the residents. The insecurity instilled by these attacks forced some residents to leave. In subsequent phases of development, the communities built better defenses, by digging multiple trenches around their homes. They might have learned that a single protective trench was insufficient to deter the enemy or give their women and children enough time to escape, while the men defended the frontlines.

There is also clear indication that by the final phase of development, the residents reverted to a single trench. This is probably because they had advanced their own weapons and learned better defensive tactics. In subsequent attacks, the invaders probably had to return in larger numbers and with greater military strength to defeat the residents. The invaders could have laid siege on the village and eventually routed the inhabitants. Anyone remaining could have been burned out or assimilated by the invaders.

Archeology also shows that once the settlements were cleared, they were not inhabited again. That tells us the invaders were on their way to another destination, or they resided nearby, which could explain why the natives didn't return. Who wants to return to a home they have been forced out of, when the enemy resides nearby, has superior weapons, a tendency to wage unprovoked warfare, with a demonstrated history of destruction, ethnic cleansing and possibly even genocide? Genetic science tells us that Bosnia and Herzegovina's natives survived, and their gene pool continues among the population living there, demonstrating continuity.

STARČEVO CULTURE



Extent of the Starčevo culture, which remained distinguished from Bosnia and Herzegovina's Butmir culture during the Neolithic era.

Some interpretations of archeology placed the roots of Bosnia's Neolithic culture as originating from Starčevo (66 Istorijski). Starčevo is a culture that is often represented in the form of a model from that region in Vojvodina. It was never established by archeologists that Starčevo comprised of a group that settled in the region of modern-day Serbia during the Neolithic era and later expanded to other regions. Starčevo was excavated right after the first world war, in a political climate that had deep-seated European biases against the Ottomans and a reaction to failed Austro-Hungarian imperialism. So, when a team of European archeologists, supported by scholars from the United States, presented findings from Starčevo, there was an unintentional bias in favor of accepting Starčevo as a type site or model of the culture. Serbian academics expanded on this notion claiming the culture to be *autochthonous*, meaning it was indigenous and not brought in by migrants. They further suggested that the culture expanded from its origin in Starčevo.

Serbian scholars ascribed the region of Starčevo to follow the perimeter of the post Austro-Hungarian Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, which had by then been renamed by King Alexander I as *Kraljevina Jugoslavija* or Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Alexander was determined to keep his domain from tearing apart, so he proclaimed a kingdom and enforced the notion of *jugo-slav*

(South Slav) loyalty. Starčevo served exactly that strategy—a "superior" Slav culture that spawned the others.

Beginning in the 1930's, archeologists and scholars expanded the scope and characteristics that defined Starčevo to include new findings across Serbia, Montenegro, and parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Macedonia. After the second world war, Yugoslav papers continued to reinforce Starčevo's dominance in the region by attributing artifacts and assemblages from digs outside Serbia back to Starčevo. The definition of the culture was expanded into a broader Starčevo–Körös–Criş culture by European archeologists. The included scope spanned a wider region including parts of Hungary, Bulgaria, and Romania, making Starčevo more of a definition rather than a source.

Nonetheless, Serbian claims that Starčevo spawned the culture in Bosnia and Herzegovina, begs to ask how Starčevo reached such a wide geographic region. To answer this question, some Jugoslav archeologists and anthropologists offered that Starčevo was transferred through human migration. This meant that the people from Starčevo spawned the communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This was accepted as a plausible explanation since scholars had already accepted the idea of cross-European migration of Neolithic society. So, to them, it made sense that the "Slavs" from Starčevo would spawn other "Slavs," such as those declared to be in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Those scholars failed to distinguish between people who began speaking a Slavic language in the 9th or 10th century CE, and those who were not ethnically or genetically Slav. The characterization of Slavs as Western, Eastern, or Southern was "good enough" for them, as it aligned to political divisions that had resulted from hotly contested borders and territories in Europe at the time. This was politically expedient in the 20th century (CE) since Europe fought two world wars and dozens of more constrained wars in contest over territorial and economic dominance.

Through such a complex background and process, after the end of the second world war, the regional priority of Starčevo was established and generally accepted by academics all over the world. Even today, contemporary scholarship continues to rely on and reinforce the Starčevo expanse into Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, one significant difference in modern archeology is that archeologists now describe Starčevo as a set of characteristics, rather than a "superior culture."

Another way of looking at the change in perspective is to remove Bosnia and Heregovina from the definition of Starčevo's culture. Because Bosnia and Herzegovina has contributed so much to Starčevo's characteristics and attributres, removing Bosnian artifacts would make Starčevo's characteristics much less interesting, and force a rethink of cultural influences in the region. Thus, Starčevo becomes a much poorer culture and does not necessarily fulfill all the characteristics of the much richer Butmir culture as a site type, making Butmir somewhat unique and original as a source.

Is Bosnia and Herzegovina's culture from Starčevo?

In 2004, a genetic study identified Bosnians and Herzegovinians as European natives who had split from a broader group as they fled the last ice age. The study identified Bosnians and Herzegovinians as members of the genetic Haplogroup (Hg) I1. The people of Starčevo belonged to a different haplogroup (67 Lipson), *Hg G2a, which intermingled with or assimilated other cultures. Therefore, the proposition that people from Starčevo migrated in large numbers to Bosnia and Herzegovina is now proven to be scientifically inaccurate. Improved carbon dating shows that Starčevo, and its offspring the Vinča culture, didn't begin expansion until after Bosnia's culture was set* (68 Chapman). *Bosnia and Herzegovina's Paleolithic population spawned the subsequent Mesolithic and descendant Neolithic communities.*

Previous claims that Bosnia and Herzegovina's Paleolithic era population were transients, have been disproven by the high percentage of Hg I still prevalent among Bosnia and Herzegovina's current-day population. Other claims that the Peleolithic societies didn't persist or continue are also discredited by the genetic findings.

In the case of Starčevo, when migration was eliminated as an explanation for the spread of that culture, scholars proposed a process of transference as a way of explaining how Starčevo reached Bosnia and Herzegovina. The claim that a smaller group of people took Starčevo's culture and ideas with them and transfered or shared them with other groups has also been invalidated due to more accurate dating of Bosnia and Herzegovina's native societies and their cultures.

Other differences include distinguishing characteristics between the two cultures, such as Bosnia and Herzegovina's decorated spherical pottery engravings compared to Starčevo's rudimentary ridges and depressions.

So, if the Starčevo culture was carried out to the region, who carried it out? There are two dominant theories about migrations to and within Europe that could offer some insight into how culture spread in the early to late Neolithic period. One theory postulates that Indo-European tribes from the Pontic Steppe moved westward across Europe, bringing with them culture, agriculture and military force. Another theory proposes that the tribes came from Neolithic Anatolia and spread culture and language peacefully through diffusion.

Regardless of their origin, it is likely that Indo-Europeans brought advanced farming knowledge in waves to Neolithic Europe. These travelers could have brought cultural ideas to Starčevo and Bosnia and Herzegovina at relatively the same time.

As the communities developed independently, they could have originated with common themes in their cultural, religious, social, technical and agricultural practices. This theory better represents the variations in the artifacts that archeologists could not explain in relation to Starčevo. It explains why Starčevo pottery is coarser and Bosnian pottery is finer, why there are differences in paint variation and decorations. It also explains how each society developed at its own pace and in the context of its own circumstances and needs—a more reasonable explanation where Starčevo is not superior but relatively equal to comparable cultures in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Starčevo did not spawn Bosnia and Herzegovina's culture.

INDO-EUROPEANS

Indo-European tribes visited central Europe, including the region of Bosnia and Herzegovina, between 4,500 and 2,500 BCE (69 Mallory). The tribes brought with them knowledge of diverse cultures and agriculture that they had acquired in other parts of Europe and Asia. On their journeys, some Indo-European tribes settled and established systems of trade and barter, but for many generations, they remained relatively isolated and did not comingle to any measurable extent with the natives. In Bosnia, the Indo-European influence was relatively nomadic, and it brought new ideas ranging from agricultural techniques to naming geographic features.

Hydronyms

Hydronyms *are the historical names given to bodies of water. The study of hydronyms tells us the origins of those names and how they were conveyed through history. Hydronyms are names of rivers, lakes, and parts of oceans. An example of a* ***hydronym*** *is the Rhine River in Germany. Rhine is a Celtic name, not German. Its root comes from the word "rhenos", which means "raging water" in the Celtic language (74 Tockner). When Germanic people settled around the Rhine, they retained the name, and absorbed the Celtic word "Rhein" into their language.*

The name Bosnia is likely rooted in the Indo-European word that linguists identify as "*Boh*" or "*Bogh*" (70 Malcolm, 71 Mayer, 72 Šabić), which translates roughly as "flowing water."

The Indo-European word morphed into the form, "*Bas*," which eventually became a *hydronym* (name of water bodies) for two vital rivers in Bosnia, the *Vr-bas* and *Bas-na* rivers. *Bas-na* became *Bosna*. Another indication of the persistent nature of this phenomenon is the name of the river *Bosut*, a tributary of the Sava. That name could also have originated from Proto-Indo-European. In modern Persian, Hindi, and Urdu, the word "*bagh*" means garden, an implicit reference to well-watered fertile land.

From Persian, the word *Bagh* also implies heaven or god sent, as a gift. To the Indo-Europeans, Bosnia's lush green valleys and nutrient-rich fertile land, must have seemed like a gift from god. To refer to the location of the "people living near flowing water," the Indo-Europeans used an antecedent of the word *Bas'ani*, which later became *Bas'nae*, and eventually morphed into the hydronym of the River *Bosna*.

A different theory about Bosnia's name is a reference to the *Ilyr Bathinus*, which is also Indo-European, and was used by Roman historian *Marcus Velleius Paterculus* in the 1st century CE (73 Mesihović).

The Bosna River, sourced from springs at Mount Igman near Sarajevo, meanders through Visoko. The country is likely named after this body of water. Photo © 2017 Irfan Mirza.

Wide-angle panorama of the River Vrbas. Indo-Europeans could have seen this river and derived its name from a word in their proto language. Photo: Jan Šiman, Czech Republic

Between the 1st century BCE and the 5th century CE, Bosnia was referenced in various written forms. In the town of Solin in Croatia, there is an inscription to the Magistrate of Dalmatia, Roman general *Publius Cornelius Dolabella*, describing the *Bathinum* River between two Ilyr tribes, the *Breuci* and the *Osseriates* (75 Mesihović). *Dolabella* lived from about 85 BCE to 43 BCE. The word *Bathinus* is derived from *Bas* or *Bagh*. Another reference includes a 5th century CE Roman *itinerarium*, or map, known as *Tabula Peutingeriana*, which lists a Roman station, *Ad Basante*, that is believed to be a reference to Bosnia (76 Miller).

Scholars have also proposed other theories about the origins of the name Bosna ranging from the Roman word *Bassanus*, which was later "Slavicized" (62 Šabić), to a variation of the Roman word *Bosina*, which means boundary (77 Šabić). One fact holds true across all the centuries, the name Bosnia (and later Herzegovina) has always been undisputed as the land of the people known as *Bošnjani or Bošnjaci* (plural of *Bošnjak*), or in English, Bosnians or Bosniaks. Although, Bosniak has, in recent times, taken on a narrower meaning to describe one particular group within Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Other theories about Bosnia's name include an Ilyr tribe named *Posena*, or the Ilyro-Slavonic construct *Batan*. The Ilyr *Posena* tribe was not dominant and had limited historical impact compared to other Ilyr tribes like the Ardian, Delmatae, or Japod. Many Ilyr names and nametypes were adopted and quite a few still continue to this day: Istria, Dalmatia, Neretva, are just a few. The Slavic tribal name *Batan* dates to the 7th century CE, well after Bosnia was being referenced in historical documents. So, it is not chronologically aligned to the prior naming of the people, their rivers or their land. While there are many theories and speculation about the origins of the name Bosnia, one thing is clear, the name is unique and predates historical knowledge.

Bosnian Identity

The identity of Bosnians and Herzegovinians developed over a period that spanned several thousand years. Bosnians and Herzegovinians are natives to Europe and to Bosnia and Herzegovina. They did not have the requisite to land someplace and name their place of landing after they conquered it.

Even before Paleolithic times, Bosnia and Herzegovina was home to hundreds of tribes who lived in relative isolation and with only limited political affiliation with each other. The tribes arrived as natives; meaning, they were born there. At first, the tribes were nomadic, so they wandered, hunted, and gathered food as needed. They journeyed in step with the animals they commonly hunted. As herds of animals moved seasonally or because of glacial or post-glacial conditions, the tribes moved with them. Each time they moved, the tribes did not name the region where they took temporary residence. If they gave names to landmarks or areas that could be well-defined, those names were not written or documented. The tribes didn't have a script or written language, at least not one that we have identified.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the tribes did leave cave drawings or engravings. So, their places of residence are clearly identifiable. They also left imprints and designs on artifacts that demonstrate consistency and continuity. The designs have discernable repetitive patterns that are consistent across many artifacts. The artifacts span across generations, which demonstrates continuous or continual residence in the same places or neighborhoods. These are the early building blocks of identity.

As the nomads transformed into settlers, the tribes learned to collaborate with each other in matters of safety and spiritual beliefs. They shared artistic ideas, technology, and cultural developments. They formed systems of barter and trade with each other. They began learning from each other, which helped establish cultural and social norms. The norms contributed to traditions, habits, behavior and attitudes. Norms that benefitted society were fostered, those that didn't were discarded and replaced with more effective standards.

There is indication throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina's history that tribes and communities closely collaborated with each other to defend their homes against invaders. Women and children from a village facing attack would escape and find refuge in a nearby village. The men from the nearby village would go as reinforcements to help their neighbors.

Through tight collaboration, the pursuit of shared ideals, and a singular desire to grow their community, Bosnia and Herzegovina's natives began the lengthy process of establishing their identity. It is a testament to the wisdom of the natives, and their immediate descendants, that they anchored their identity in values, rather than conquests. Bosnia and Herzegovina distinguishes itself from other European nations in this respect.

History has shown that identities that are acquired by conquest are lost when someone else conquers. Those identities are short-lived. On the other hand, identities that are based on foundational principles and values, such as those of Bosnians and Herzegovinians, endure even the tests of time and conquest.

Bronze Age

Bronze short sword dating to the late Bronze era from the Veliki Mošunj area near the town of Vitez in Herzegovina. This sword was masterfully crafted and likely belonged to someone important in the community. The sword has extravagant designs and motifs that distinguish the Veliki Mošunj type of artifacts. Photo: Zijah Gafić, courtesy of Zemaljski Muzej Bosne i Hercegovine, National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

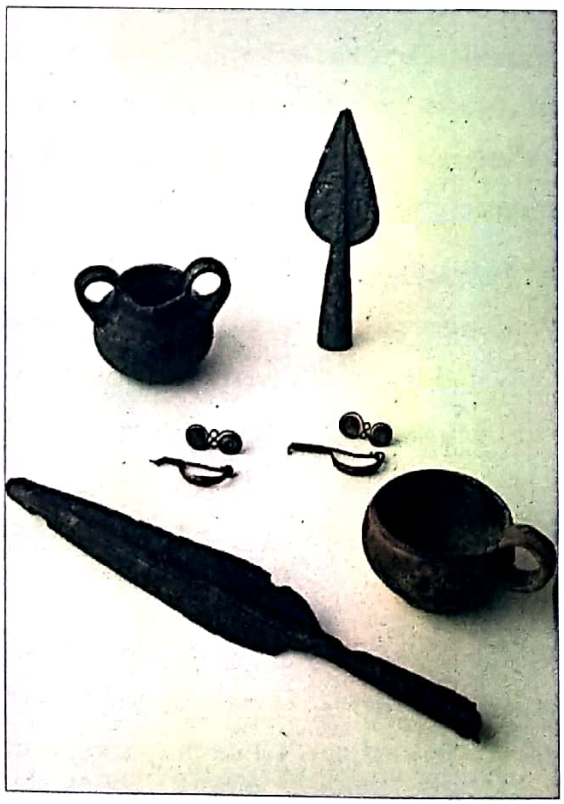
By the Bronze Age (between 1800 and 800 BCE), Bosnia began to see migration of European tribes, such as those from upper Pannonia (78 Sedov) and from other parts of Europe. One such migration saw the *Ilyr*, who were groups of nomadic, transient Indo-European tribes from the Pontic-Steppe region (79 Stipčević,). The Ilyr first travelled through the region, but later began settlements in the Pannonian basin, closer to Bosnia and Herzegovina. They were joined by Ilyr tribes that were likely related or had common origins or *linguistic affinity* at one point. Many of tribes migrated out of modern-day Hungary. Some Ilyr tribes migrated through Bosnia and Herzegovina, making their way to the Adriatic Sea and the south-eastern coast of Italy (80 Frazee). Over time, as Ilyr tribes traveled through Bosnia and Herzegovina, some of those groups chose to settle in and around Bosnia and Herzegovina.

An Ilyr settlement was established in the south-eastern region of the Italian peninsula, in the area around a town known in ancient times as Messapia. Ilyr settlements spanned the area of modern-day Salento province (81 Carpenter). The Ilyr also settled around the modern coastal town of Triest, on the eastern coast of the Adriatic in northern Italy. Towards the end of the Bronze Age, some large Ilyr tribes, such as the Delmatae, Narensi, and Japod, made settlements along the Adriatic coast and in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The heterogenous makeup of the Ilyr tribes (79 Stipčević) likely presented some level of linguistic challenges and trust issues in terms of collaboration with the locals. Since the Ilyr tribes didn't speak the same languages, they had little, if any *linguistic affinity*, and naturally did not have a basis to establish trust.

Most of the Ilyr tribes were small and prone to attack by invaders and each other. However, as they settled, those tribes adopted the local dialect and sought means of coexistence and collaboration with each other and the locals. The Ilyr were well structured groups with internal social hierarchies and chains of command. The structure was necessary as the tribes moved through dangerous territory that was prone to attacks and raids by nomadic warrior races and regional warlords.

Due to their organization and hierarchical command and social structure, the Ilyr were significantly different than the well-settled native communities of Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Over time, tribal differences between Ilyr groups led to polarization, external stratification, and an extension of the Ilyr hierarchical social structures (82 Lovrenović), which were introduced to the natives of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In areas where the Ilyr dominated, Bosnia and Herzegovina's locals had to adapt and respond to the increased power of the Ilyr command structures. Some local groups aligned with the Ilyr while others distanced themselves and resisted assimilation.

***Left**: Bronze age artifacts discovered around the town of Livno in Herzegovina. These artifacts can be traced to the Delmatae Ilyr tribe that occupied a vast area across modern-day Dalmatia and parts of Herzegovina. The name Dalmatia is derived from the Ilyr name of the Delmatae tribe.*

Iron Age

An iron age pendant worn on a headband typically by women in the Sanski Most area of northwestern Bosnia-Herzegovina. Photo: Zijah Gafić, courtesy of Zemaljski Muzej Bosne i Hercegovine, National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

By the Iron Age (1200 to 600 BCE), Bosnians came together as a community that descended from common ancestors. These people are known by genetic scientists as haplogroup I-M170 (68 Dupuis). Their counterparts who went to the Ukraine emerged with a dominance of the R-M17 haplogroup. The group that went to the Franco-Spanish Pyrenees emerged with the R-M269 haplogroup as the dominant marker. This group eventually migrated to Scandinavia.

Some neighbors who live close to Bosnia's borders, also belong to the I-M170 haplogroup. As populations move farther from Bosnia, the recurrence of this haplogroup becomes dramatically less frequent. This means that the haplogroup remained relatively isolated within the territory of modern-day Bosnia and Herzegovina, and they did not venture much past its borders for the purposes of settling elsewhere. The data also tells us that few races penetrated the social insulation of this group (1 Rootsi), although many races coexisted, and even managed to work collaboratively towards common goals.

Of the people in the Bosnian haplogroup, genetic samples show a significant percentage can trace their lineage to ice-age ancestors who first walked on European soil. Their ancestors were European natives who came to Bosnia and Herzegovina to escape the ice age. Once they settled in

the milder climate and protected valleys, the communities underwent a unique transformation. They developed into pastoral communities whose greatest struggles pivoted around survival and expansion of the population. During that period, Bosnians lived as relative equals among themselves, and developed a keen sense of social commitment to each other.

Genetic data shows the maternal lineage of the group that remained in Bosnia morphed much less than those who left. This provides evidence that Bosnians and Herzegovinians were isolated and insulated from the major migrations that were taking place across other parts of Europe during roughly the same period. Those migrations quickly caused various forms of stratification to develop, eventually leading to feudalism and autocratic rule.

The genetic indicators of lineage also give us an indication of how Bosnian communities began to form. Archeological artifacts show a technological focus on agriculture, in contrast to other European cultures that pivoted on armament and artifacts of war.

There is much evidence that points to Bosnians and Herzegovinians protecting their women. Archeological evidence shows a high respect and regard for women. Genetic studies show that Bosnian and Herzegovinian women's genetic markers to be relatively more constrained than the men's.

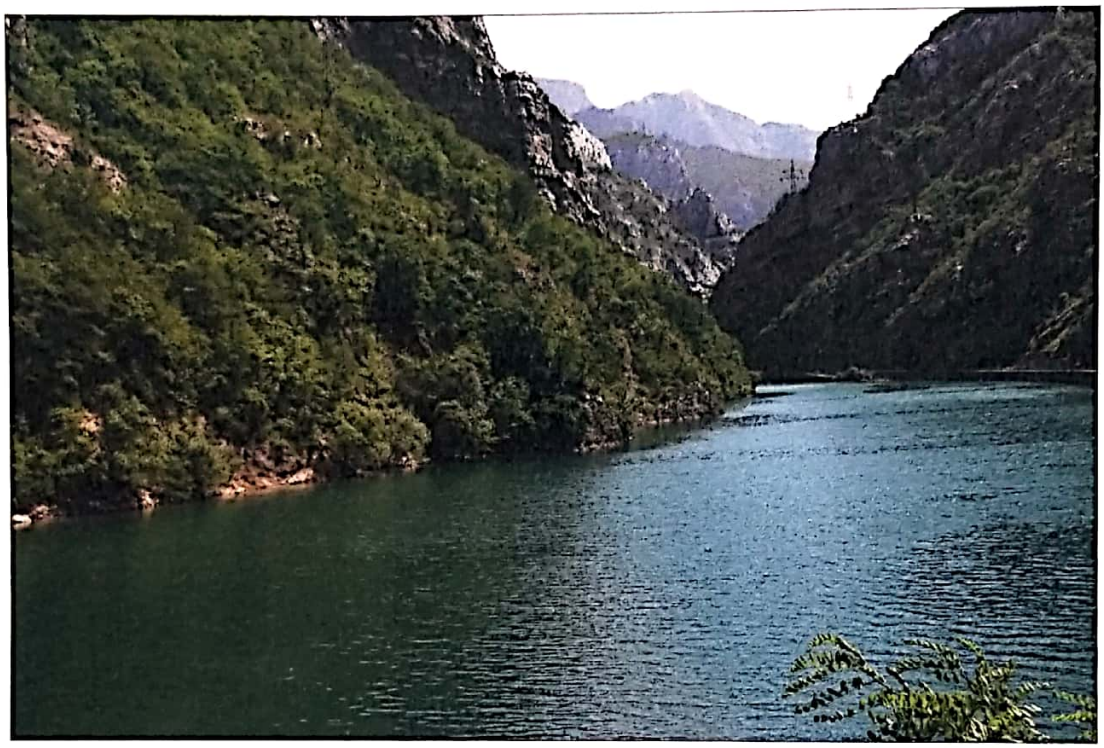
Some research among maternal (mother's) genetic indicators provide a way for Bosnians to trace their maternal ancestry to both Biblical and Evolutionary Eve (84 Rohde, 85 Bennett) with relative simplicity. Similar studies did not indicate the same level of clarity for the paternal (father's) lineage (86 Malyarchuk). There are also studies that tell us the maternal lineage of Bosnians and Herzegovinians to be different than the Ilyr (79 Stipčević).

This reinforces the hypothesis that Bosnians and Herzegovinians protected their women, and generally discouraged or prevented their girls from marrying or mixing with outsiders. The Ilyr, at one point in time, were considered outsiders by native Bosnians and Herzegovinians. They were either transients or newcomer arrivals to the region.

Certainly, over time, neighboring communities had to collaborate with each other, giving their offspring plenty of opportunity to build acquaintenaces, romances, and even teenage feuds. Additionally, the proximity of the tribes and the communities was such that there had to be some level of comingling.

Finally, the trade routes through Bosnia and Herzegovina served as common travelways for merchants, journeymen and invaders. Those travelways bridged communities with each other and served to open doors for relations and sharing of ideas, culture and language.

Age of Antiquity



During the period of the antiquity, transient tribes, known as Ilyr, set-up trading posts on cliff-tops or along the banks of rivers such as the Neretva River in Herzegovina. Photo © 2017 Irfan Mirza

The Age of Antiquity spans from 800 BCE, the time of the Greek epic, *Homer*, and continues through 500 CE, ending with the decline of the Roman Empire (87 Brown). Sometime during that lengthy period, Bosnia and Herzegovina transformed from a peaceful refuge for Europe's natives, into grounds for political and military contest between the Roman, Ilyr, and Ostrogoth dynasties.

After the Iron Age, there was little migration across Europe, although local migration (from village to village) was quite common (88 Scheidel). Additionally, many tribes fled attacks and invasions, taking refuge in nearby sanctuaries. During the Antiquity, Bosnia and Herzegovina became one such sanctuary, providing refuge for European and Indo-European races.

Bosnia and Herzegovina saw numerous groups of migrants. Among these were Pannonians, who settled north of Bosnia, the Ilyr, who journeyed west, the Thracians, who stayed towards the east and south, and various Hellenic groups who influenced cultures in Bosnia, but mainly settled south of Bosnia and Herzegovina (89 Frazee). There were also groups of Romans, Celts, Ilyr, and nomads from other European regions, many who settled in and around Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Ilyri

Ilyr fort on a hilltop at Daorson in Herzegovina. The photo shows the remains of a main wall on the side of the fort. Partial columns (above) and parts of an arch are still intact at the site. Photo © 2017 Irfan Mirza.

As early as the 7th century BCE, groups of Indo-European tribes migrated to the western Balkans and settled in parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Slovenia, Montenegro, Serbia, and most of Albania (90 Boardman). These tribes were not culturally or linguistically homogeneous, as neither archeology nor linguistics have demonstrated close affiliation between them. The tribes never identified themselves collectively, nor did they use a name of any kind (93 Roisman) to describe themselves as a group. However, they later became known broadly as

Ilyr Tribes in Bosnia and Herzegovina

*The **Ilyr** comprised several tribes, such as the Japod, Ardiaei, Narensii, and Daorsii (91 Wilkes), that ended up in Bosnia and Herzegovina and along the Adriatic coast. The tribes were diverse and were not made up of a single or homogenous group. The Daorsii built a fort, known as Daorson, in Herzegovina. The Narensii lived in settlements along the banks of the Naro or Naren River (91 Wilkes), later called the Neretva. The Ardiaei lived in Montenegro, but populated villages along the Naro (92 Šašel Kos), extending inland to the modern-day town of Konjic, in Bosnia and Herzegovina.*

the *Ilyr, Illyr, Illyri or Illyrians*. Within Bosnia and Herzegovina, and in the surrounding region, these tribes thrived for centuries, relatively isolated within the highlands and plateaus of Bosnia and Herzegovina's mountainous terrain.

The town of Čapljina, in Herzegovina, is believed to be the location of an Ardiaei tribal post (82 Roisman). The word *čaplja* in Bosnian means 'heron.' The Latin word for heron is '*ardea*,' which explains the Roman use of the Ilyr tribe's name.

The name *Ilyr* came from the Greeks who had contact with one of these tribes during the Bronze Age. The Greeks named the tribe *Ilyr* (94 Boardman) and included the Ilyr in their mythology where *Illyrius*, the son of *Cadmus* and *Harmonia*, became ruler of the Illyrian people (95 Grimal). The Ilyr were migrant tribes who settled in a region that spanned Istrija in Croatia, to the town of Bihać in northern Bosnia. They settled in isolated villages near the Sava River in Donja Dolina, near Banja Luka (96 Smith), and migrated to Herzegovina, near towns such as Stolac and Bugojno. Other settlements in Posavina, Dalmatia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Serbia, and Albania became home to much larger Ilyr populations (96 Smith).

The Ilyr tribes established commerce and heavily influenced the local economy. They traded with native Bosnians and Herzegovinians and carried their goods out to the Adriatic Sea as well as inland. They cycled through alliances and wars with the Romans, the Macedonians, and other neighboring Ilyr and native tribes.

Maintaining the scholarship of the Greeks, the Romans labelled the native population of Bosnia-Herzegovina, alongside their Ilyr émigrés, as *Illyri* (97 Wilkes), and called the region *Illyricum*. Since that time, the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina were labelled as Ilyr (98 Wilkes), even though, numerous Bosnian and Herzegovinian tribes and communities lived there long before the arrival of the Ilyr.

Bosnia's native tribes are not genetically dominated by any of the known Ilyr markers (1 Rootsi, 22 Marjanović). Certainly, the Bosnians and Herzegovinians didn't share a language with the Ilyr, until the Ilyr absorbed the local dialects of native Bosnians and Herzegovinians. Otherwise, the Ilyr didn't have a unified language that could help identify them as a culturally homogenous group (99 Wilkes). Moreover, the tribes within Bosnia and Herzegovina or Dalmatia never collectively referred to themselves as Ilyr (100 Roisman).

Ilyr culture was diverse and different than other settlements in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Ilyr did not have common cosmologic or religious practices (98 Wilkes). Although many Ilyr tribes shared mythological beliefs, other than some broad myths and mythological persona that were common to Indo-European tribes, the Ilyr had no common bonds with the natives of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Furthermore, there are no findings among Ilyr archeology that indicate a fertility culture, like the culture of Bosnia-Herzegovina's population. The Ilyr also didn't revere women or worship female deities, which was commonplace among the natives of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In fact, the Ilyr were *patriarchal*, meaning their social and leadership system was dominated by males. Ilyr pottery was also different in that it was marked with graffiti on clay (101 Wilkes), unlike that of Bosnian natives (61 Butmir), which had more complex geometric and repetitive designs and engravings.

In all respects, the Ilyr tribes were not from Bosnia and Herzegovina. They came as a completely different group of immigrants who lived for centuries alongside Bosnia and Herzegovina's natives. Nearly all the Ilyr tribes benefitted from the good graces of Bosnia and Herzegovina's native population.

Genetic studies show that over time, the local population of Bosnian and Herzegovinian natives absorbed some genetic markers of various Ilyr tribes. This indicates that the Ilyr mixed or intermarried with the natives to some extent. During times of peace and prosperity, Ilyr tribal members married into and from other Ilyr tribes.

Because the Ilyr were a diverse group, and Bosnian and Herzegovinian paternal lineage shows some mixing with Ilyr tribes (79 Stipčević, 86 Malyarchuk), it only follows that a percentage of Bosnians and Herzegovinians possess genetic markers common with these Ilyr tribes. However, the same can also be said of Dalmatians, and some Italians and Montenegrins who can trace their ancestry to either coast of the Adriatic Sea.

Canal in Istria, a potential hiding place for Ilyr pirates trying to avoid Roman galleys in the Adriatic Sea. Ilyr ships would transport both legitimate and illicit commercial goods along the waterways of the Adriatic, before moving them inland to trading posts. The trading posts nearest Istria were in Croatia at Ilirska Bistrica, and further inland in Bihać, Cazin, and Bosanski Novi in northwestern Bosnia and Herzegovina. Photo Omar Gubernati, Biella, Italy.

The Fort at Daorson

The fort at Daorson was built as an acropolis, a defensive citadel on higher ground. The construction of the main wall of the Daorson fort is estimated to the 4th century BCE. Other parts of the remains can be dated to the 1st century BCE. The entire structure was built on a settlement that dates to the 17th or 16th century BCE. Archeological evidence indicates that settlement persisted to the end of the Bronze Age, approximately 9th or 8th century BCE.

At some point, the Daorsi were influenced by Hellenic culture (102 Basler). *Remnants of a granite sculpture of Cadmus and Harmonia were also found at the site, alongside other Hellenic period artifacts and Greek inscriptions. The Daorsi minted their own coins, as many coins from different periods were found. They used the coins, which had commodity value, to conduct business and trade with other groups.*

The Daorsi were an isolated tribe in that they didn't align with the political hierarchy of other Ilyr tribes. They were attacked by the Dalmatae, but successfully repelled the aggressors. Shortly after that, the Daorsi joined tribes in the Adriatic Sea in seeking the protection of Roman forces in the region. In return, the Daorsi fought alongside the Romans in the Ilyr wars and supported the Roman invasion with their strong naval fleet. After the wars, the Romans granted immunity to the Daorsi, and allowed them to remain as venerated citizens of the Roman Empire. However, the site at Daorson was obliterated during the extended period of the wars between the Dalmatae and Romans.

Scholars place the construction type of the fort as Mycenae largely due to the stacking of stones and the impression of Hellenic culture on the site. Deeper analysis indicates a level of sophistication indicating that more than just construction technique or architectural practices came from the Mycenae. In Mycenae architecture, stones are set in megalithic walls, just like at Daorson; however, many Mycenae stones are not cut. They are used mostly unmodified.

In Daorson, all the stones are cut into relatively equal sized rectangular blocks along each length of the wall. In alternating layers, the rectangular sizes diminish, creating a natural interlock between horizontal and vertical layers. The stones are placed very close to each other, with minimal clearance between adjacent blocks, and no use of mortar. In these ways, the construction at Daorson is considered more in the Ashlar style, but still second phase of cyclopean architecture derived from Mycenae.

Artifacts from Daorson indicate the use of Greek alphabet, likely Koine Greek, a common vernacular of the Greek language (103 Horrocks). *Koine was also the language of the Hebrew Bible, the New Testament, and the writings of the Christian church* (104 Jobes).

Ashlar style construction of the megalith, main wall, at the Daorson fort. Photo 2017 © Irfan Mirza.

Map depicting Ilyr tribes in Bosnia and Herzegovina and surrounding region. Many Ilyr tribes were mobile across the region, and many were absorbed into larger Ilyri tribal realms or became their subgroups. The notable exception is the Scordisci, a mixed group of tribes that came under the political authority of the Celts.

Ardiae	• The Ardiae were a very large and powerful Ilyr group that settled in the central parts of Bosnia. They provided unifying leadership from the modern town of Konjic to neighboring Ilyr tribes.
Breuci	• The Breuci were an Ilyr tribe that settled in the region around the northern Bosnian town of Brčko, which is where the town likely got its name. During Roman occupation, the Breuci were among the leaderrs of the Great Ilyr Revolt, and upon defeat they were enslaved by the Romans. They later received Roman citizenship under the rule of Trajan.
Daesitiates	• The Daesitiates were likely an amalgam of native Bosnians and Herzegovinians and some number of Ilyr tribes that lived in the northern and central regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina. They ruled the region for more than three centuries from their capital in the town of Breza in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this period, the Daesitiates influenced the ethno-cultural complex that stretched from the Adriatic to the Danube.
Pirustae	• The Pirustae were an Ilyr tribe that migrated from Pannonia down through Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Adriatic coast of Dalmatia to Montenegro, settling around the town of Pljevlja. The Pirustae were prominent miners, who the Romans called on to run their mining operations for silver and other precious metals in Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and Romania. They later settled in Dacia, modern-day Romania.
Andizetes	• The Andizetes were a small Ilyr tribe from Pannonia that lived in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Andizetes were recorded in Roman history as a tribe that put up heroic resistance to Roman domination. They received Roman citizenship under the rule of Trajan.
Oseriates	• The Oseriates were originally a Celto-Ilyr group that spread from Pannonia. Some Celtic genetic markers in Bosnia-Herzegovina likely came from this group.
Boii	• The Boii were a group of Celto- Ilyr who came from Upper Moesia and Eastern Pannonia. They soon related to the local tribes in Moesia, modern-day Serbia. The ethnonym Srboi, which is a precursor to the name Serb, originates in the Ilyr Boii tribe.
Japodes	• The Japodes were an Ilyr tribe that branched from the large Liburnian group of Ilyr, occupying the region from the Kupa River to the Velebit mountain range, the central inlands of Croatia and the Una River valley in Bosnia and Herzegovina. the Japodes were a mix of Celtic, Pannonian and Venetic tribes. They were later dominated by the Celts.

Some Ilyr tribes that settled in or around Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Ilyrian Wars

Queen Teuta of the Ilyr ordering the execution of Ambassadors from Rome.
Drawing by Augustyn Mirys, 1720 – 1790.

By 219 BCE, the Romans overran Ilyr settlements from the Neretva valley in Herzegovina to Dalmatia. They routed Ilyr tribes along the Adriatic coast all the way to Istria. The Ilyr had built trading posts and fortified strongholds to support both legitimate commerce and illicit trade. Some Ilyr tribes had taken to piracy along the trading routes in the Adriatic Sea (105 Grant), raiding Roman galleys in open waters. Pirated goods were brought into Herzegovina and exchanged at Ilyr trading posts.

In the town of Desilo in southern Bosnia and Herzegovina, archeological investigations in a small lake found buried and sunken Ilyr boats. Desilo was likely connected with the Neretva River by way of *Hutovo Blato*, now a nature reserve and aviary sanctuary. Desilo was home to the *Ardiaei* Ilyr tribe, who established a trading post there. The Ardiaei became known as builders of towns and ships. They gained fame as seafarers and fishermen, and they protected Ilyr pirates of the Adriatic.

The Romans cycled through alliances and betrayals with and against numerous Ilyr tribes. Some Ilyr tribes on the Italian peninsula became loyal to the Romans. Others remained defiant. A few Ilyr tribes completely assimilated into Roman culture and embraced their language, traditions and religions as their own. The same pattern repeated in Dalmatia, where the Ilyr not only embraced Romanization, but then contributed to it through military leaders and even viceroys and emperors.

Nonetheless, decades of strife between the two powers gave momentum to the *Delmatae*, who declared themselves independent of Ilyr King Gentius (106 Berranger) in the year 180 BCE, simultaneously separating from Bosnia-Herzegovina. Twelve years later, the Romans marched on Scodra (present-day Albania), capital of the Ilyr kingdom (107 Wilkes). They defeated Gentius and made *Illyricum* a province of the Roman empire, encompassing all of Bosnia, and parts of Herzegovina, except for Dalmatia.

During the years of conquest of the Ilyr, Roman commanders used a principle known as *pars pro toto* (108 Merriam-Webster) to label all of Bosnia-Herzegovina as *Illyricum* (109 Šašel Kos). *Pars pro toto* is the use of a part to describe the entirety of something. The Romans likely mimicked the Greeks, who also refered to the region north of Greece as Illyricum. However, the Romans extended the use of the Ilyr name to justify military objectives and outcomes.

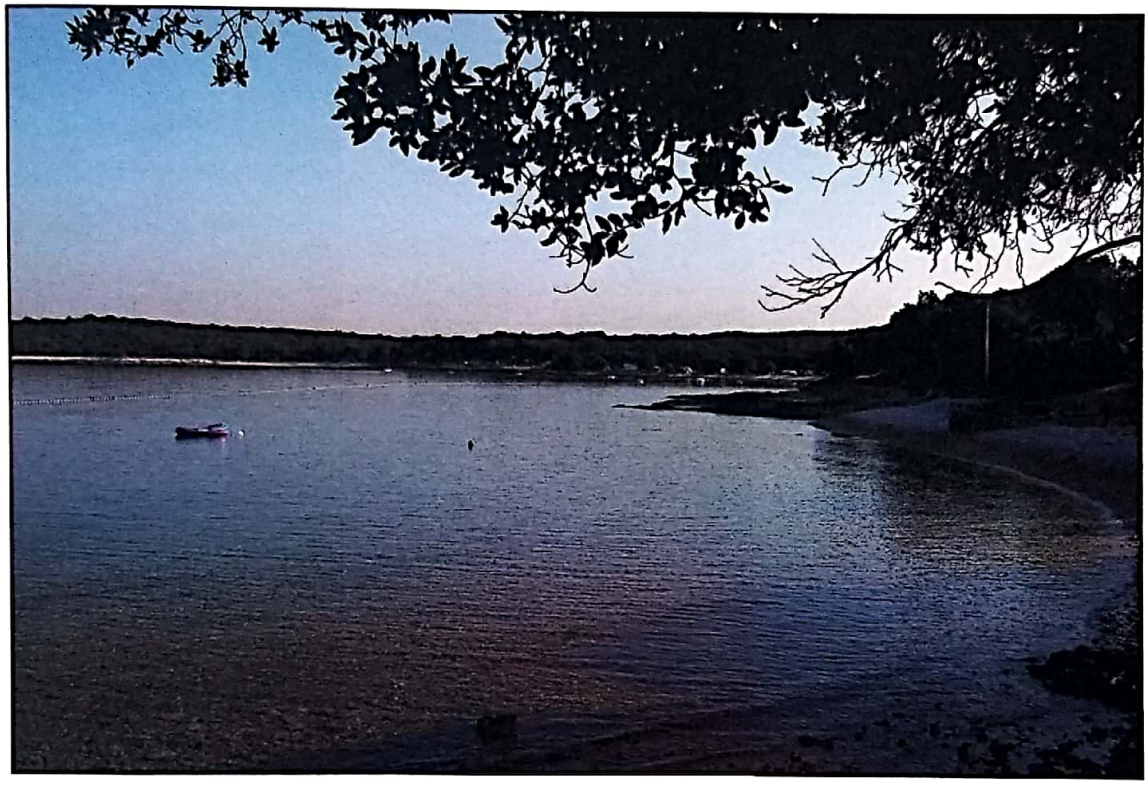
By broadening use of the label *Illyricum* to include Bosnia and Herzegovina, Roman leaders made it palatable for the Senate and citizens of Rome to accept the deployment of numerous garrisons to the region. The garrisons stepped up the war, driving casualties higher than expected. Despite the additional force, the Ilyr refused to capitulate. While the Roman armies were fighting entrenched warfare, where armies move in columns and fight an enemy that is protecting territory, the Ilyr remained mobile. They would fight and retreat into the mountains.

The Roman armies began attacks on all villages along the paths of the retreating Ilyr. That lead to countless civilian casualties. Among these were large numbers of dead and wounded in the region circumscribed by modern-day Dalmatia, Serbia, a region that stretched from the Danube to the Sava River (110 Watkins), and it also included all of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

When asked to account for the casualties, Roman commanders simply reported the casualties were Ilyr or stated that they were in Ilyricum. To Roman Senators and civil authorities, the name Ilyr had already been maligned, making the casualties seem acceptable in the course of warfare.

This act of descriptive deception on the part of Roman commanders seems to be a situation of self-preservation. Perhaps they didn't want to explain the degree of brutality that they unleashed through their tactics in the region. On the other hand, history has demonstrated that whitewashing tragic events and revising the narrative of bloody outcomes has long been a common practice.

Ilyr Mythology



Modern-day Istria, named after Ilyr goddess Histria, now a major city and tourit resort in Croatia. Photo Omar Gubernati, Biella, Italy.

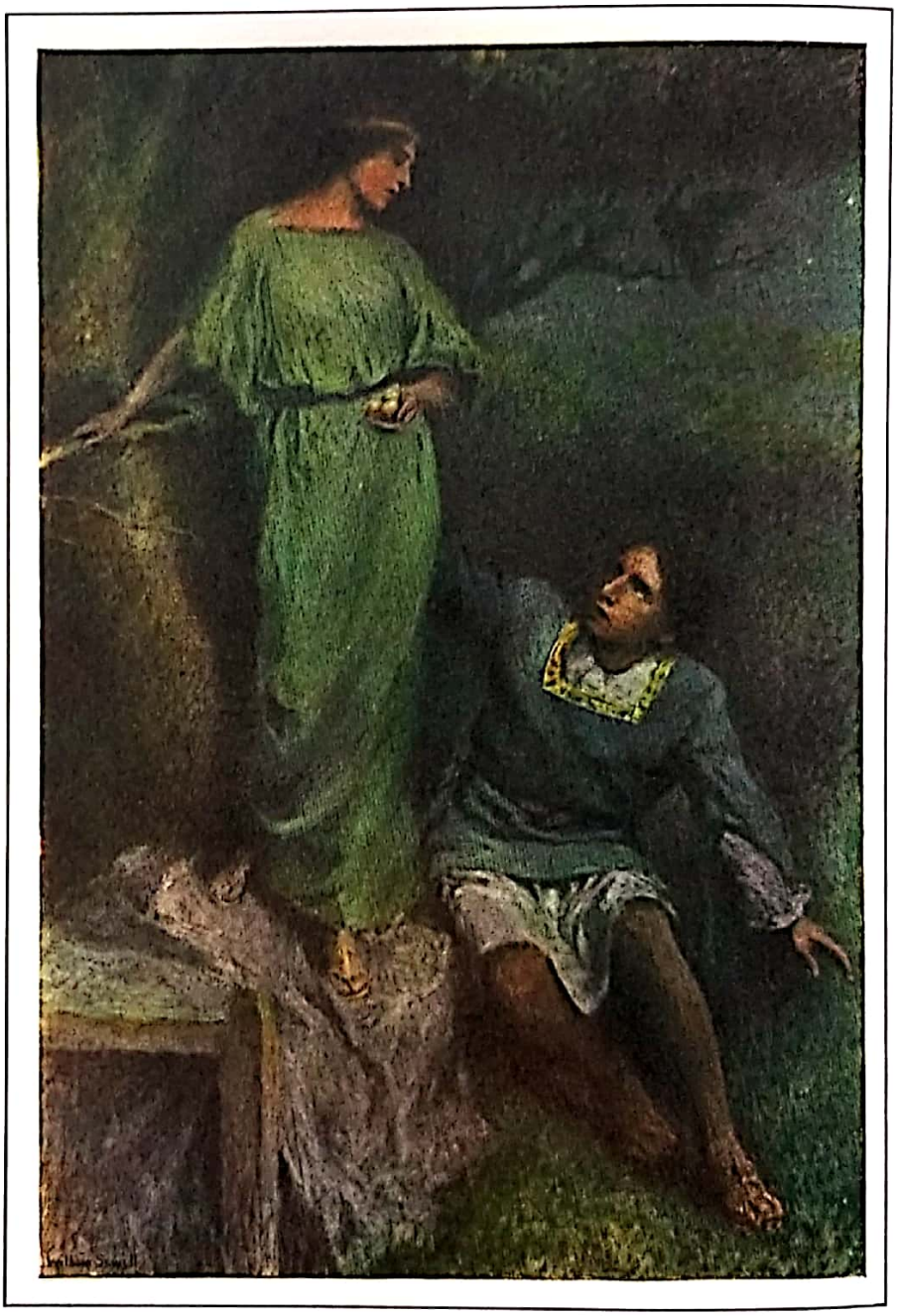
The early myths and cosmology of Ilyr tribes in Bosnia and Herzegovina were made up of an extremely diverse set of values and beliefs. Bosnia's religious diversity emerged as dozens of unique and differentiated tribes and nomadic Indo-European groups made their way to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Each brought with them systems of beliefs, traditions, and rituals, some of which were absorbed by native communities, while others remained exclusively within the domain of their original adherents. Bosnia's natives originated from a dominant fertility culture (111 Fekeža). Communities survived through hunting animals and grew by women bearing children. Paleolithic Bosnia was also steeped in the cult of water (112 Fekeža), which, from the beginning, has been key to human survival and expansion of communities.

Zlatna And the Golden Apples

There is a well-known Ilyr myth about a faery, or fairy, called Zlatna and some golden apples. In this myth, a righteous king is granted a magical tree that bears apples made of gold. However, the king awakens each morning to find the apples taken from the tree. His eldest son sets to guard the tree. However, just before midnight, the prince falls asleep, only to find the next morning that the apples had been taken.

The next day, the second son guards the tree, with the same results. The third day, the youngest son, who learned from his brothers, takes a short nap at the beginning of the night and awakens before midnight when he sees a flock of peahens fly to the tree to take the apples. He asks one of the hens if she could leave him one apple. The hen turns into a maiden that he falls in love with. She hands him two apples, one for himself and one for the king, before disappearing. The king is pleased and asks the young prince to guard the tree again.

The prince's brothers become envious and send a witch to spy. The witch hides under the bed and just when she sees one of hens turn into a maiden, she sneaks out and cuts a flock of the maiden's hair. The maiden reverts to a hen, takes the apples and disappears. The prince decides to scour the kingdom in search of the maiden. He finds the maiden, and they marry. The tale is about perseverance and wisdom.



A 1914 painting by British artist William Sewell from a book entitled "Hero Tales and Legends of the Serbians" by Woislav M. Petrovich. Serb scholar Vuk Stefanović Karadžić published this tale as Serbian mythology (Zlatna jabuka i devet pauna).

By Neolithic times, archeological digs have shown that communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina thrived and grew in terms of size and capacity through a system where women led families and were heads of the community (111 Fekeža)—in other words, a *matriarchal* order, meaning a social system where women are obviously revered as mothers of society. Some archeological evidence and findings indicate that Bosnian and Herzegovinian women were responsible for social structure and intra-tribal order and relations within Bosnia's fledgling communities (112 Fekeža).

With the immigration of a group of tribes known as *Ilyr*, Bosnia began to see pagan beliefs ranging from *snake worship* to a *Grand Mother*, or *Mother Goddess*, and the legendary invocation to *Thane* and *Vidasus* (113 Stipčević). Gods and goddesses, such as *Dracon* and *Draccena*, the divine couple, were accepted as myth even by natives. *Nutrika* gained prominence as a goddess protector of children. *Sentona* was the goddess of agriculture. *Ika* was the goddess of fertility. Closer to the Adriatic coast, *Histria* was known as the goddess of the geographical area of Istria, which was named after her (114 Mallory).

Many myths from Bosnia and Herzegovina's early periods have persisted and had a continuing influence on natives and migrants. The names and attributes of Ilyr deities became engrained into the language and natural understanding among the people of the region. *Boria*, the god of wind, spawned the word *bora* or *bura*, for wind storm in the Bosnian language. The goddess of storms and clouds, *Nebra*, became the source for the word *nebo*, which means sky or clouds. In addition to Ilyr mythology, Bosnia saw myths of Celtic origins. The goddess of health, *Trita*, is believed to be Ilyr, but with Celtic influence. Other such gods included *Melosok*, a protector, and *Irja*, a goddess of love (115 Wilkes).

Thana was accepted as an influential goddess across much of the Balkans (99 Mallory). In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Bosnian language name for *Thana* became an axiomatic designation for women. The word *Thana* morphed into *žana*, and later *žena* in the Bosnian Slavonic language.

In other cultures, *Thana* is accepted as the equivalent of the Roman goddess *Diana*, a culture and belief system that spread widely through Europe. *Thana* is believed to originate in early Indo-European mythology that made its way across much of Europe (115 Wilkes).

The faery *Zlatna* is also believed in lore to help righteous warriors. Mythology has it that *Zlatna* originated in Bosnian forests. In northwestern Bosnia, *Zlatna* has the epithet of queen, and the goddess of Ilyr rulers. *Zlatna* was known as the *faery of moonlight* and as the *Golden faery*. Her name means gold or golden in modern Bosnian. *Zlatna* reappeared much later in Slavic lore as *Gorska vila*, a forest fairy. The Slavs adopted Ilyr mythology and gods, such as the story of the *golden apple* and the well-known pantheon of Slavic mythology, *Perun*, also *Perundi* or the Ilyr *Shrundi*, god of thunder and husband of *Perenda*.

The relationship between the forest faery and Zlatna is viewed by some scholars as that of mother and daughter. In lore where Zlatna is believed to be Thana, there is a basis for a belief in the origins of life from the forest. Faeries were believed to be born out of morning dew on forest leaves. Out of this myth and the tight dependency they have on the forest, Bosnians and Herzegovinians developed a deep respect and stewardship of the area's forests.

Other myths and lore about Zlatna focus on healing the sick and adopting righteous men as sons or marrying them. Some myths allude to faeries bearing human offspring and leaving them on earth for their fathers to raise. These children were orphans and considered to be extraordinary gifts to humanity. From those myths, Bosnians and Herzegovinians developed a culture of helping orphans to the point that entire communities would participate in raising orphan children, alongside children who were abandoned by their parents. The impact of Ilyr mythology on Bosnian and Herzegovinian culture has persisted over the years, enriching the beliefs and norms of the region.

The fort at the old city of Velika Kladuša, northwestern Bosnia and Herzegovina, where Mujo Hrnica lived. Photo © 2018 Irfan Mirza.

Ilyr Myth in Bosnian and Herzegovinian Folklore

The stories of Zlatna and other Ilyr myths are captured in folklore and songs such as those from Bosnia's Ottomon era about the warrior, Mujo Hrnjica (116 Mujezinović), who was a Bosnian hero with great historical achievement. His proper name was Mustafa Turcalović.

He lived in the town of Velika Kladuša in northwestern Bosnia and died in 1641 CE.

Common folk understanding in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia is that his death was reported by Croatian nobleman and military leader Krsto Frankopan Tržački, who admired the warrior's gallantry.

In the mythical story of Zlatna from Ilyria, Mujo anachronistically sings and dances with faeries, who are disguised as goats.

He is shrewd and able to unmask the goats, revealing the faeries and subjecting them to his will. In another song, Mujo is described as a brother to Alija Đerzelez, even though the two are not of the same parents. Because Alija is nursed by Mujo's mother, the two are considered brothers.

From lores and myths, Bosnians and Herzegovinians embraced many traditions which they later found were ideas that were introduced into their culture by the Ilyr.

Ilyr helmet dating to the 7th century BCE, found in Donja Dolina near Bosanska Gradiška. Photo: Zijah Gafić, courtesy of Zemaljski Muzej Bosne i Hercegovine, National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Is Bosnia and Herzegovina's population Ilyr?

Tribes known as Ilyr came to Bosnia and Herzegovina in the 10th century BCE. These tribes are classified as Indo-European, with origins in the Pontic Steppes of the Caucasus mountains. Early Ilyr tribes inhabited a region that spanned from the highlands of Albania al lthe way to Slovenia, extending east to Greece and Thrace, with scattered settlements throughout the Balkans and around the Adriatic.

The Ilyr learned to mine and forge metals and developed a collective economy. They had a few common languages, although they are all extinct now. Their languages were different than the Southern-Slavonic spoken in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Ilyr belong to the Halstatt culture, a set of practices and artifacts that emerged between the late Bronze and early Iron Age in central and western Europe.

Ilyr society was self-governing with councils of elders and a chosen leader. By the 3rd century BCE, Ilyr leadership was consolidated under King Agron who formed an alliance with King Demetrius II of Macedonia. At the peak of Ilyr power, the king's seat was in Scodra, Shkodër in modern-day Albania.

Ilyr strongholds stretched along the Adriatic coast to Istrija in modern-day Croatia. After Agron's death, his widow, Queen Teuta, took control of the realm and launched naval attacks against Sicily and coastline Greek colonies. Her attacks provoked a response by the Romans, resulting in her defeat and the Roman conquer of Ilyr lands in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Through the Roman and Ilyr wars, Bosnia and Herzegovina's Ilyr population coexisted with native communities. They settled along main transit routes and on the banks of waterways with access to the sea.

They built trading posts and forts where they carried out both smuggling and commercial trading activities. The Ilyr established an administrative center at Salonae, the modern-day town of Solin in Dalmatia. A few Roman emperors were of Ilyr origin, including Aurelian, Diocletian, and Constantine the Great.

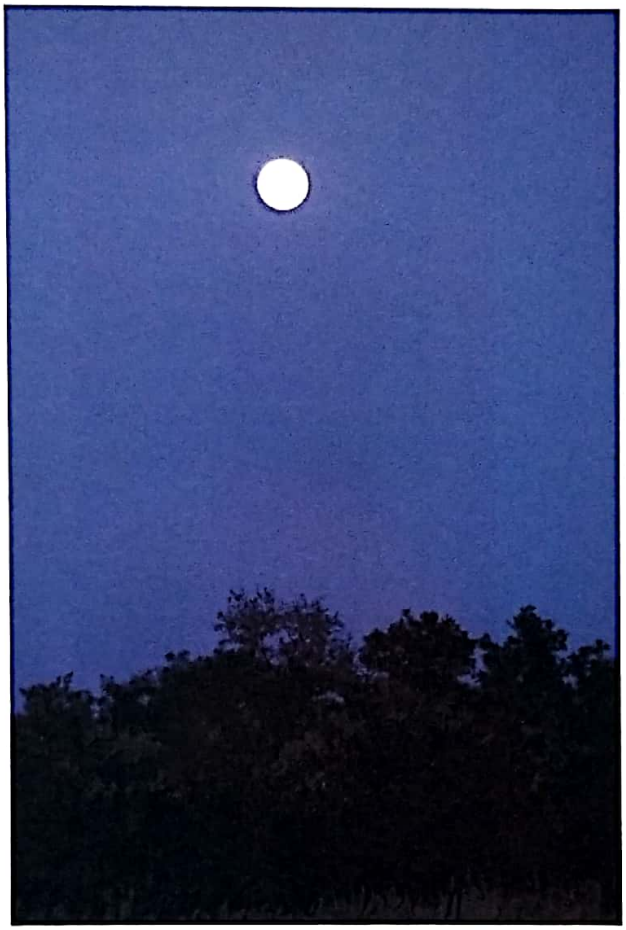
Despite the extensive presence of the Ilyr in and around Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bosnians never absorbed the Ilyr language or much of the Ilyr culture.

Only some Ilyr names of places remained in Bosnia after the Ilyr tribes were conquered and dispersed by the Romans. However, Ilyr myth and folklore continued to capture the fascination of Bosnia and Herzegovina's indigenous population.

Bosnians and Herzegovinians carry genetic markers that date their ancestors to Paleolithic times, well before the arrival of Ilyr. Ilyr populations were denser in Dalmatia and Albania, where genetic studies reveal Ilyr ancestry, especially in those markers that are common between Dalmatians and Albanians.

While Bosnians and Herzegovinians do not have a statistically high percentage of these markers, more than a millennium of cohabitation resulted in the Bosnian and Herzegovinian paternal lineage picking up some Ilyr genes.

Early Monotheism



The summer moon seen in Bosnia and Herzegovina. While early Bosnian mythology revolved around deities and powers on earth, Bosnia's cosmology focused on the stars and the travels of the sun and the moon. Eventually, the lunar cycle dominated the spiritual discourse among intellectuals. Photo © 2017 Irfan Mirza.

The earliest known faiths of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina were influenced by myths and cultures that were brought in by refugees, migrants, nomads and settlers. Beyond the Neolithic era, most migrants to Bosnia and Herzegovina brought with them a *patriarchal* order, which diminished and displaced the role and position of women. As migration became easier, Europe's tribes expanded the territory where they hunted for food. They would grow their communities by absorbing other tribes. They would enslave labor with little regret as the source of the slaves were usually resistant or enemy tribes and communities.

From a theological perspective, a large majority of Bosnia and Herzegovina's immigrant cultures pivoted around many deities and included pagan rituals such as snake and animal worship. In contrast, Bosnia and Herzegovina's native religions pivoted on reverence for ancestors, beliefs in spirits, and the worship of higher powers.

Monotheism

Monotheism *is defined as the belief in a single God, who is the all-powerful creator of the world* (117 Wainwright). *Religions that preach* ***monotheism*** *are known as* ***monotheistic****, and include Judaism, Christianity and Islam* (118 Britannica), *among others.*

Monotheism *postulates the uniqueness of God, with no other gods in equivalence. Some scholars refer to this as* ***exclusive monotheism*** (103 Wolff). *Islam and Judaism belong to this form. Another form of monotheism is proposed as* ***inclusive*** *or* ***pluriform monotheism****, which recognizes distinct gods with some underlying unity* (119 Wolff). *Most modern sects of Christianity consider themselves in this form. However, traditional Judaic and Islamic interpretations contest whether multiple gods, even if unified, could ever be considered monotheistic.*

Some archeology indicates tribes who practiced cremation and even some forms of human sacrifice in the region. However, Bosnia and Herzegovina's most enduring native traditions evolved around cosmologic phenomena: some that pivoted around the notion of good and evil, something we would today describe as nascent *dualism;* and others that pivoted around the notion of a supreme power, such as *Mother Goddess,* in all practicality, a primitive form of *monotheism.*

Neither dualism nor monotheism took the forms of the current concepts until much later in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Contemporary monotheistic ideas were brought to Bosnia and Herzegovina and the broader region of the Balkans (120 Hughes) first by travelers and emissaries, who were influenced by Judaism and Christianity. Christianity took hold in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the 6th and 7th centuries when the Christian church of Bosnia and Herzegovina formed.

However, Jesus' teachings arrived in Bosnia and Herzegovina in trickles and waves, dating to as early as a few decades after the missions of Saints Andrew and Peter, who were both contemporaries and disciples of Jesus. Both Andrew and Peter were sent by Jesus to convey his message (121 Nolland) to other lands. While neither reached Bosnia and Herzegovina, they reached neighboring communities whose leaders brought their message to the people then living the territory of modern-day Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Bosnia's exposure to Christianity follows a complex path, at first in the form of Jesus' oral tradition brought in waves by migrants who were adherents of Jesus' early teachings. These waves were followed by challenges from neighboring communities who embraced *dualism.* But these challenges were rejected. They culminated in the formation and strengthening of the Bosnian church, which followed a form of Christianity best described as *exclusive monotheism.*

Later forms of Christianity, such as those espoused by today's Christian churches, did not arrive in Bosnia and Herzegovina until well after the practices and theology of Bosnia's native Christian churches had already been set.

According to Christian tradition, Jesus is said to have sent his disciples in pairs (122 Halley) to preach and share his traditions. These traditions were carried out of the Galilee by his apostles and emissaries decades before changes to the creed were made by the various churches and political forces who were vying for power and control of Christian masses and converts.

Jesus' original traditions reached Bosnia and Herzegovina, where they appealed to new converts. However, Christianity changed in the first two centuries after Jesus, before reshaping the foundational principles of Christian doctrine (123 Baynes). Those late developments in Christianity only reached the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina centuries after they were accepted in other parts of Christendom. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, these changes and the envoys who brought them faced unexpected challenge by adherents of Jesus' original doctrine. After the changes to Christianity were adopted by foreign church powers, such as the Bishop of Rome, intervention from those powers led to conflicts with Bosnia's Christians, resulting in the Crusades in Bosnia, and the decline of Bosnia's church. **Before the establishment of developments in Roman and Byzantine politics and Christian patriarchates, enlightened early converts in Bosnia and Herzegovina had already embraced what they believed was the message of Jesus, and they didn't relinquish that message, even under threat of execution by the sword or fire. Many died holding on to those early Christian beliefs and Jesus' message dearly.**

Dualism

Dualism *is a form of belief that implies two powerful forces, such as gods that complement each other. Dualist ideas include the notion of good and evil, bright and dark, and summer and winter. In many Indo-European cultures, dualistic ideas imply a force that is good and creative, while the other is evil and destructive. Bosnia and Herzegovina's early beliefs pivoted on dualist ideas*

Christian ***dualism*** *focuses on God and Creation. The belief that God and Creation are distinct but related through a bond that makes them inseparable. European sects such as the Cathars and Paulicians followed a dualism between the material world, created by an evil power or God, and the spiritual world of a benevolent or moral God. Bosnia and Herzegovina's religious beliefs pivoted on dualist ideas as well.*

Christians in Bosnia and Herzegovina faced the 11th century CE schism in Christianity that resulted in contested domination between the Romans and the Byzantine (124 Nichols). The schism was settled partly in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where countless Christians and their protectors lost their lives. Bosnia's early Christians lived through generations of persecution and Crusades. To better understand how Bosnians embraced Christianity, we must understand how Christianity developed from Jesus' earliest teachings to the domination of the church and its ecclesiastical hierarchies.

BIRTH OF CHRISTIANITY

An image from the Dead Sea Scrolls. Source: US Library of Congress.

Christianity began as a monotheistic faith (125 Cross) centered on the life and teachings of Jesus, a Palestinian born in Nazareth. Jesus' teachings eventually made their way to Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, to fully comprehend how they arrived and their impact, we must first understand how those teachings began and how they changed.

Shortly after Jesus began his mission, his disciples started sharing his message locally through oratories and lectures. The process of learning Jesus' teachings and sharing them became known as Jesus' oral tradition. By following these teachings and traditions, the disciples built on foundational principles of another monotheistic religion, Judaism (126 Sanders). So, it was only natural that the disciples appealed, at first, to Jews (127 Herbermann), then to pagans. At that time, Jews belonged to sects such as the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes.

Christian scholars generally agree that Jesus was from a Jewish sect. Conservative scholars place him among the Pharisees (128 Maccoby, 129 Falk), who outnumbered other sects. More progressive scholars argue there is little evidence of Pharisees in Galilee during the time of Jesus (130 Funk). Galilee is the region of Palestine where Jesus ministered. The discoveries of the Dead Sea Scrolls, in 1946, 1956 and 2017, caused Christian scholars to renew their thinking about Jewish tribes and sects at the time of Jesus. The scrolls form a collection of manuscripts that were found at Khirbet Qumran, the Arabic settlement in the West Bank, near the northern edge of the Dead Sea. The manuscripts reveal characteristics and beliefs or preferences of Jesus that we later find among Bosnia and Herzegovina's early Christians.

Some scholars believe the manuscripts place Jesus among the Essene (131 Eisenman, 132 Stegemann) sect, a group of Jews who shared mystic and *ascetic* beliefs. Other scholars counter-argue that the scrolls are the work of Jews in Jerusalem (133 Golb). Christian theology, and the teachings of Jesus (134 O'Collins), favor the Essene origins of some manuscripts. The Head of the *Holy See* from 2005 to 2013 CE, Pope Benedict XVI, also known as Joseph A. Ratzinger, places Jesus among the Essenes (135 Ratzinger).

Arabs refer to Jesus as *'Isa*, and Christians as *'Isai*, followers of Jesus, possibly of Essene origin. While scholars have not concluded whether Jesus was an Essene, they generally agree that his values, beliefs and practices, both before and after divine revelation, were heavily influenced by Essene philosophy and theology (136 Bratton).

Over time, Jesus' values were spread to his disciples and followers. Jesus' beliefs and *ascetic* teachings eventually found their way to communities in northcentral Europe, from which some ascetic Christian emissaries and evangelists eventually migrated to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Jesus' followers practiced *asceticism*, just like the Essenes and Jesus' disciples (137 Holweck). Per Christian belief, the disciples were the closest companions of Jesus, and later became known as the apostles.

Asceticism

Ascetic beliefs constitute a lifestyle characterized by abstinence from worldly or material gains (139 Finn). Asceticism (the practice of ascetic beliefs) encourages a frugal lifestyle, where material possessions and pleasures are renounced, and time is spent fasting and reflecting on spiritual pursuits (139 Finn). Bosnia and Herzegovina's early Christians were mostly ascetic and frowned on material wealth or power, including the power of the Romans.

In addition to *asceticism*, Jesus' relation to God was also brought into question by early Christian scholars. Some scholars, such as Origen of Alexandria, attributed a father-son relation between God and Jesus, but maintained Jesus was subordinate to and less than God (138 Moore). This made distinctions between Jesus and God, causing entire communities of Christians to assert diverse interpretations of their relationships with God and Jesus.

From the onset of Jesus' mission, his disciples carried his message through a process known as oral tradition (140 Ehrman), where divine teachings are spread across the land by word of mouth. Emissaries of Jesus' disciples began jouneying to far off destinations while preaching that Jesus was a single, divine, being. These teachings reached converts in the Upper Volga region, who embraced *asceticism* and Jesus' single, yet divine nature. These converts stayed hidden out of fear of persecution and repercussion from non-Christian regimes and rulers. Fleeing from persecution, they migrated to Bosnia and Herzegovina carrying the message and belief in the nature of Jesus' divinity with them.

While the emissaries were away, discussions began within the empire about three different aspects of God (the beginnings of Trinitarian principles). Some church leaders argued that these aspects were perceived by believers, and not inherent to doctrine (141 Stokes). This resistance posed significant setbacks to the emerging ideology behind the Trinity. But it also placed the early emissaries unwillingly in a class of protestants who they did not even know. By the time the synods

and councils finally agreed on the basis of their Christology, Christianity in its original form had taken hold in cloisters and monestaries hidden within the already isolated mountains and valleys of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Denominations, that came after Jesus, adhered to ideas that were not sanctioned by the synods or creeds, such as the principles of *dualism* (142 Hamilton). This ancient belief attributed God's spiritual realm to the gospels of Jesus, while the physical and material world were attributed to God as defined by the Old Testament (128 Ehrman). Satisfied with interpretations of the oral traditions and teachings of Jesus, numerous Christian sects began exercising influence over early Jewish converts (143 Herbermann) alongside non-Jews. Amid the breadth of Roman rule, and that of the church, they spread concepts such as the dual principles of God, and asserted that Jesus, as the son of God, was subservient (144 Hindson) or subordinate (143 Ehrman) to God. This idea was further popularized by Arius, the head of the church in Alexandria, Egypt. The idea became known as *Arianism* and it spread in many parts of Europe. However, Arianism never reached the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Bosnia's early Christians embraced Jesus in a manner that they interpreted as a subject of God. While this interpretation did not come from Arianism to Bosnia and Herzegovina, it nonetheless paralleled Arian's concept of Jesus as subservient or subordinate to God.

Arianism

Arianism *stems from the teachings of a Christian presbetyr or priest named* ***Arius*** *from Alexandria. His teachings assert that Jesus was begotten by God, is distinct from God, and therefore subordinate to God* (145 Ferguson). ***Arius'*** *basic premise was rooted in the* ***Monophysite*** *nature of God, who is unique and immutable.* ***Arius*** *argued that Jesus was created and brought into existence out of nothing.* ***Arius*** *believed that Jesus could not be God or of God since God had no end and no beginning; yet Jesus had a beginning* (146 Britannica). *Arius stressed the oneness of God, which later conflicted with the notion of the Trinity* (146 Britannica). *Arius' views were declared heretic at later church councils.*

Why Bosnians and Herzegovinians embraced ideas that are like Arian's about Jesus, can be explained by the fact that Christian evangelists and emissaries departed Palestine well before the formation of the Christian church synods. Many of the emissaries had already

Christian Dualism

Christian dualism *refers to the belief that God and creation are distinct but interrelated through an indivisible bond* (147 Rouner). *Among some Jewish and early Christian sects,* ***dualism*** *refers to the distinction between the material world and the spiritual. Dualism supposes that material goods are evil while spiritual good was created by a moral god. It is likely that one of the forms of* ***Christian dualism*** *that reached Bosnia and Herzegovina rejected wealth and power in favor of spiritual enlightenment. That rejection included the power of the Roman church and empire, which were foreign to Bosnia's early Christian adherents.*

embraced ***Monophysite*** and ***dualist*** ideas during and shortly after the time of Jesus. These ideas were not debated until much later. So, those emissaries took the messages they had from Jesus' oral traditions and delivered them to influential priests and religious leaders, who embraced them wholeheartedly. Those priests then took those messages to Bosnia and Herzegovina, where they were embraced unreservedly. The entire time, synods and church councils in Byzantium and parts of the Roman Empire began evaluating doctrine, declaring those earlier doctrines as heresy (144 Hindson).

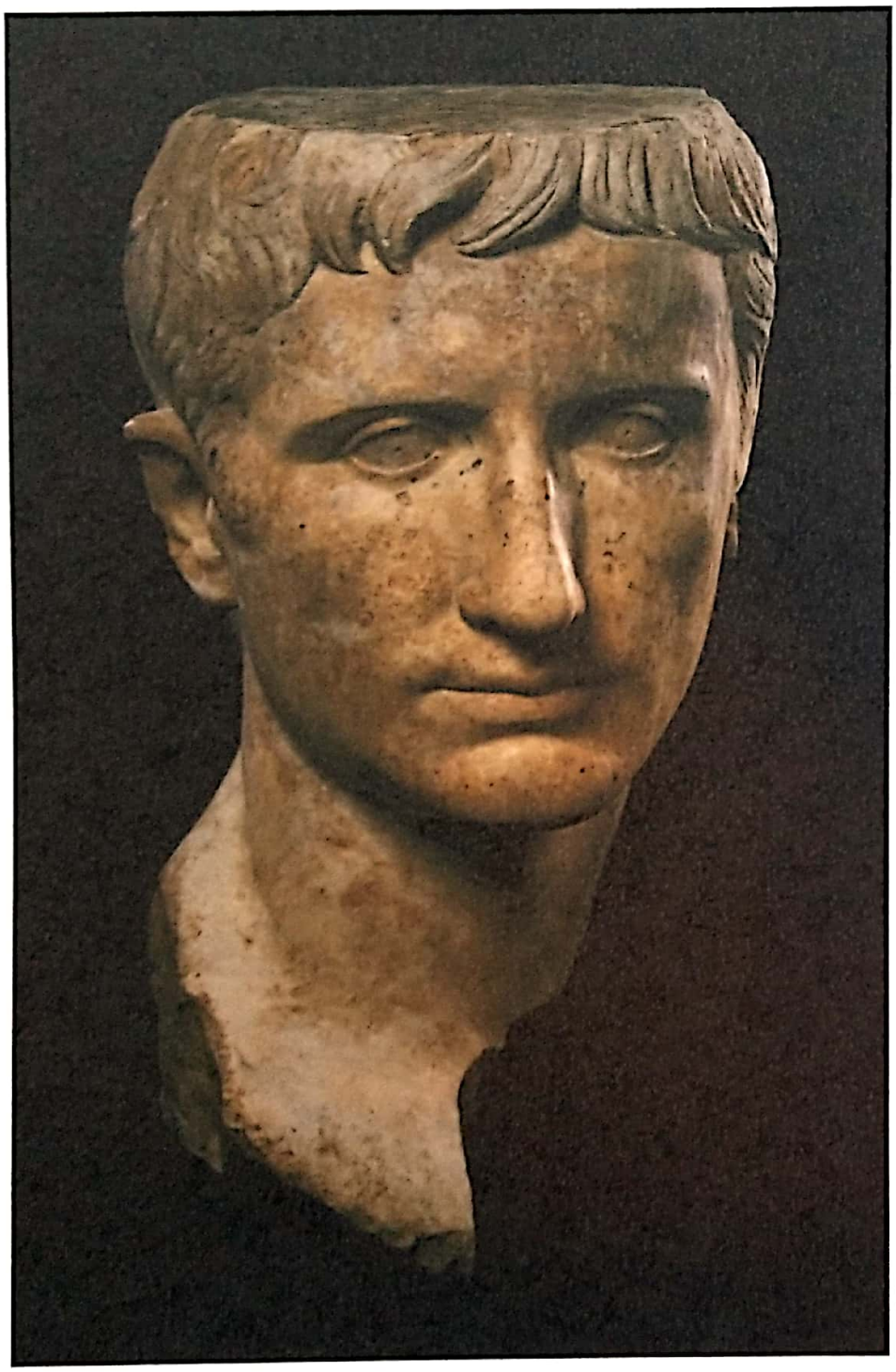
This was unfathomable to Arian and his followers, as it seemed that the church arbitrarily overturned Jesus' teachings and traditions. Once the new declarations were accepted by church leaders, there was no tolerance for deviation. Neither the church nor its political support from Byzantine leadership was strong enough to tolerate multiple interpretations of Christian doctrine. Over a period, decisions of the synods became more absolute and reached a level where the synods declared themselves to be "divine" to ensure that their decisions were embraced by the masses.

Both church leaders and Roman rulers intensified campaigns against Christian sects they considered deviant. The campaigns were mostly in reaction to the defiant nature of Christian leaders, who posed a threat to Roman rule. The defiant leaders additionally preached of individual rights vis-à-vis religious choice, which further undermined Roman doctrine. By bringing Christian leaders and priests into the fold of the synod, the Romans hoped they would have to administer a single policy and hold a single church council accountable for the actions of all Christians.

This pushed many Christian denominations into isolation, leading to more mistrust and an intensification in persecution and intolerance among Christian and Byzantine leaders. The isolation also eventually forced the deviant sects to emigrate beyond Roman jurisdiction. Those sects that had moved to the fringes of the empire entrenched their positions.

The farther the deviant sects got from Roman church influence, the more distant and deviant they appeared from the perspective of the adherents of the synods or councils. As the early converts wandered the region looking for a home, these sects or denominations and their followers took non-trinitarian, *ascetic* and *dualist* Christian ideology with them (139 Finn), which, centuries later, formed the basis of many European Christian sects. Upon pressure from Rome, some sects, like the Bulgarian church, acquiesced to Roman ecumenical demands. However, other sects, such as the Bosnian church, didn't acquiesce as they believed they were holding on to Jesus' original teachings.

The Roman church engaged in many tactics to bring Bosnia and Herzegovina's Bogomils into the fold of Catholicism, which is the later development of Christianity that espoused belief in Jesus as the son of God and the Holy Trinity. However, Bosnia and Herzegovina's Bogomil rejected all pressures to convert, despite numerous Crusades, persecution and eventual excommunication.



Roman emperor Augustus is considered the first ruler of the empire. He reigned from 27 BCE until his death in 14 CE. Born Gaius Octavius, he inherited his position as the adopted son of his mother's uncle, Julius Caesar. When Caesar was assassinated in 44 BCE, Octavius joined forces with Mark Antony and Marcus Lepidus to defeat the assassins. The three formed a Triumvirate, a leadership of three, and headed into the Battle of Philippi.

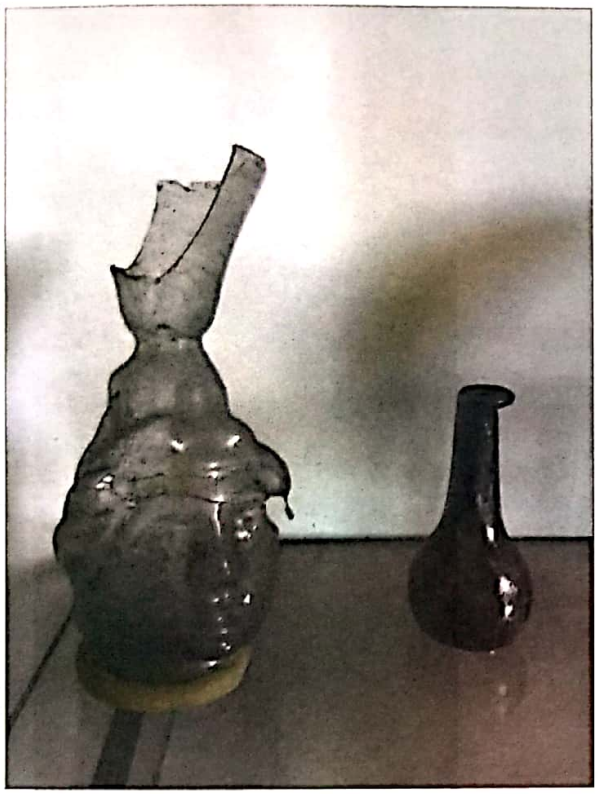
After winning the battle, they divided the Republic among themselves and each ruled as dictator of his territory. However, each ruler sought to expand, and the Triumvirate was torn apart. Marcus Lepidus lost his title and was exiled out of the land. Mark Antony committed suicide after losing the battle of Actium to Gaius Octavius in 31 BCE.

The victory at Actium allowed Gaius Octavius to reestablish the appearance of a free Republic, with authority vested in the Roman Senate.

Octavius established executive magistrates and legislative assemblies, while maintaining tight control over the military, declaring himself Augustus Princeps Civitatis, Augustus the First Citizen of the State.

Over many years of autocratic rule, Augustus built a constitutional framework that defined how the Republic could be run under his rule. He declared an era of peace, known as Pax Romana. During this "peaceful" time, Rome initiated wars to expand the empire to Egypt, Dalmatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Germania, Hispania, and Africa. Image of Augustus, artifact archived in Henry Walters Art Museum, Baltimore MD.

Roman Rule



Roman glass from 2 CE found near Bosanski Novi, artifact at Zemaljski Muzej Bosne i Hercegovine, National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Photo © 2018 Irfan Mirza.

By the 2nd century CE, the Romans had already defeated and conquered the Jews in Jerusalem, and reigned over large territory along the eastern Mediterranean, and central and western Europe, which included control and influence over parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Roman soldiers and governors were dispatched to each region, where they settled and established loyalties, through incentives, punishment, and the use of military force or violence.

In the eastern Mediterranean, the Romans played a significant role in disenfranchising Jews. They forced them to scatter, relegating them to the status of a minority (148 Hitti) that could be more readily persecuted.

The Romans had already destroyed the Second Temple in Jerusalem, a structure that is believed in Judaic tradition to replace Solomon's Temple (the First Temple). The Romans also absorbed the Herodian empire of Judea, and they began persecution of Christians throughout the empire (149 Moss).

After the crucifixion of Jesus (between 30 and 33 CE), many Christians withdrew into underground, secret communities. For the Christians, it was a matter of self-preservation. This move brought about increased suspicion among Roman leaders, who started imposing collective punishment, guilt through association, and other forms of severe penalties (150 Moss).

Out of fear of reprisals (151 de Ste. Croix), communities of Christians accelerated the process of organizing geographically separate congregations under teachings of each of the apostles. Jesus had sent eleven of his twelve apostles to spread his teachings. Thus, denominations of the Christian church were formed in the east, one for each apostle. Christians in Rome formed a community that established authority under the Apostle Peter, who they claimed as the first Bishop of Rome. Peter and Andrew led missions to the Balkans, and their emissaries or followers later took the missions to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

With early followers adhering to the original traditions of Jesus, individual Christians felt empowered to grow their denominations, challenge the authority of Roman rule, and reject pagan practices, such as human sacrifices (151 de Ste. Croix). Each of the sects also developed their own liturgies and church structure. Such an empowerment of individual Christian sects became an annoyance for Roman leaders, as each sect posed a challenge to their authority. In response, Roman commissioners stepped-up persecution, including discrimination, arrest, and punishment of Christians (151 de Ste. Croix).

Amid the nascent Christian movement, Roman envoys in the Balkans tightened their grip in provinces around the Danube River, including most of the Balkans. Their region of control spanned across present-day Croatia and Dalmatia, Slovenia, parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Vojvodina and Romania. Christianity also reached the provinces along the Danube River, with churches following the teachings of apostles Peter and Andrew.

Archeological finds in Gradac, near the Herzegovinian town of Posušje, reveal a step sanctuary dating to 184 CE. The sanctuary housed a marble temple dedicated to Roman pagan emperor Marcus Aurelius. The sanctuary's apparent loyalty to the empire, prevented attacks by Roman legions, letting the earlier forms of Christianity to take hold around the sanctuary.

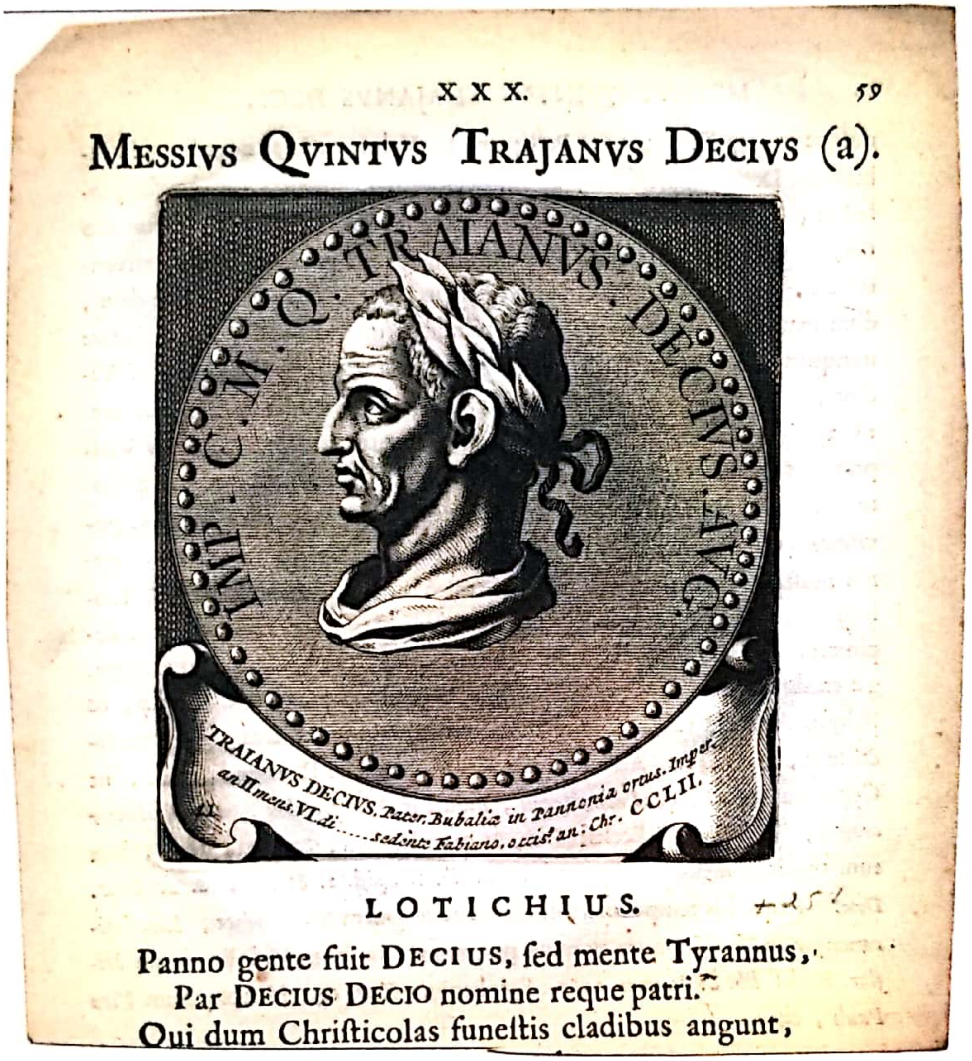
During this period, Latin-speaking Romans were encouraged to settle among the Ilyr. As a result, Roman towns were built or settled, such as the town of Blagaj on the site of the Buna River, in Herzegovina, and elsewhere in the province of Roman Dalmatia. The Romans fared well in Bosnia and Herzegovina as they forced the locals to work the region's mines that they exploited on behalf of the Roman empire. Mining entrepreneurs from Dalmatia enslaved Bosnians to work the mines.

Following Roman rule, a large group known as *Vlachs* came to Bosnia and Herzegovina from a region in present day Romania and Moldova. The *Vlachs* settled in the highlands of Herzegovina, along the Dinarides, and inland in Dalmatia. Thus, they became known as highlanders. The *Vlachs* originally spoke an early dialect of the Romanian language (152 Jorga); however, with time, they too absorbed the local Bosnian Slavonic language.

The word *Vlach* was later used in the Bosnian language for a shepherd or mountain highlander. Because the Vlachs were an unwanted group that had been repelled, the word *Vlach* gathered negative attributes which implied the absence of social or civil graces. Over time the word became applicable to Latin speakers and Orthodox Christians, especially those who demonstrated intolerance for other religions or beliefs, something that the locals characterized as a lack of civilized behavior.

Bosnia and Herzegovina's culture developed through tolerance and acceptance of many cultures and religions. Exclusionary authoritarianism was frowned upon at all levels of society.

ROME BETRAYED


XXX. 59
MESSIVS QVINTVS TRAJANVS DECIVS (a).
IMP. C. M. Q. TRAIANVS. DECIVS. AVG.
TRAIANVS DECIVS. Pater. Bubaliæ in Pannonia ortus. Imper. an. II mens. VI. di. . . . sedente Fabiano, occis. an. Chr. CCLII.
LOTICHIUS.
Panno gente fuit DECIUS, ſed mente Tyrannus,
Par DECIUS DECIO nomine reque patri.
Qui dum Chriſticolas funeſtis cladibus angunt,

An 18th century CE imprint of a medallion engraving featuring Emperor Traianus Decius, who betrayed Philip and made himself Caesar. Image: Erfgoedcentrum Heritage Center Rozet, Arnhem, Netherlands.

In 249 CE, Rome faced several complex betrayals by officers from a region in Moesia, present-day Serbia. Roman Emperor Philip I sent Senator Traianus Decius to quell a revolt by a local commander in Moesia (153 Chisholm). The revolt was started by Tiberius Pacatianus, an officer in the Danube provinces, who was bent on betraying Philip by rallying the legions against him.

Philip sent Decius because the Emperor felt he could count on Decius' loyalty, and was confident that Decius could best handle the revolt since he was from the region and had previously served as Governor of Moesia (154 Scarre).

Decius was born in the town of Baladia (155 Adkins), near present-day Sremska Mitrovica in Vojvodina. Philip counted on Decius' close ties to the region thinking that officers and soldiers of his

legion would respect Decius as a replacement for Pacatianus. Philip needed to ensure that the Danube provinces in the Balkans did not separate from the empire (156 Potter).

By the time Decius arrived in Moesia, Pacatianus' troops had killed him in their own act of betrayal. Seizing the opportunity posed by a leaderless legion, Decius plotted treason against Philip and declared himself emperor. This public betrayal forced Philip into a battle against Decius in Verona, where Philip was killed (156 Potter). Having defeated Philip, Decius asserted himself as emperor, and intimidated the Senate into recognizing him as Caesar.

With all the legions under his command, recognition by the Senate, and no viable opposition, Decius lacked only popular appeal with the citizens of Rome. To appease Rome's pagan masses, he stepped up the persecution of Christians across the empire, but especially in the Middle East and Africa, where Christian individualism had gained momentum.

In 250 CE, Decius issued a decree calling for Christians to make human sacrifices or face execution. This decree resulted in the deaths of many Christians. The edict was renewed later by Roman rulers Valerian in 253 CE, and Gallienus in 260 CE.

The prolonged persecution within the empire influenced Eastern Christian theology and helped frame the mindset of the Christian church (150 Moss). The theology of the church floundered between various movements that tried to define the relationship between Jesus and God. Up to that point, Christian theologians followed the teachings and orally related traditions of Jesus, which did not center on the concepts of God being the Father and Jesus being the son (143 Ehrman), let alone comment on the nature or substance of either.

Another emerging idea among Christian theologians was the role and survival of the Christian church. The practical matter facing Christian leaders was that the church needed to be strong in order to carry out its evangelical mission. With persecution moving to a level of sanction by the state, the church was the only institution that could withstand systematic attack. With the state as its opponent, the church had to turn to its congregation for support. By reinforcing the authority of the church with Christian adherents, the church was able to survive the discriminatory onslaught.

These concepts and realities became intrinsic to the message of Christian emissaries who travelled to lands outside of the empire, and included the Volga River, the Carpathian Mountains, and the Caspian Sea. Followers of these emissaries made their way to Bosnia-Herzegovina, bringing *monotheism, asceticism,* and non-Trinitarian views of Jesus and God. Those views took hold among the locals in Bosnia and Herzegovina and formed the basis of the Bosnian Christian church. Because the Bosnian church received these views from authentic sources close to the Apostles, it was not able to abandom them, centuries later, on-demand of the Roman emissaries (157 Brockett).

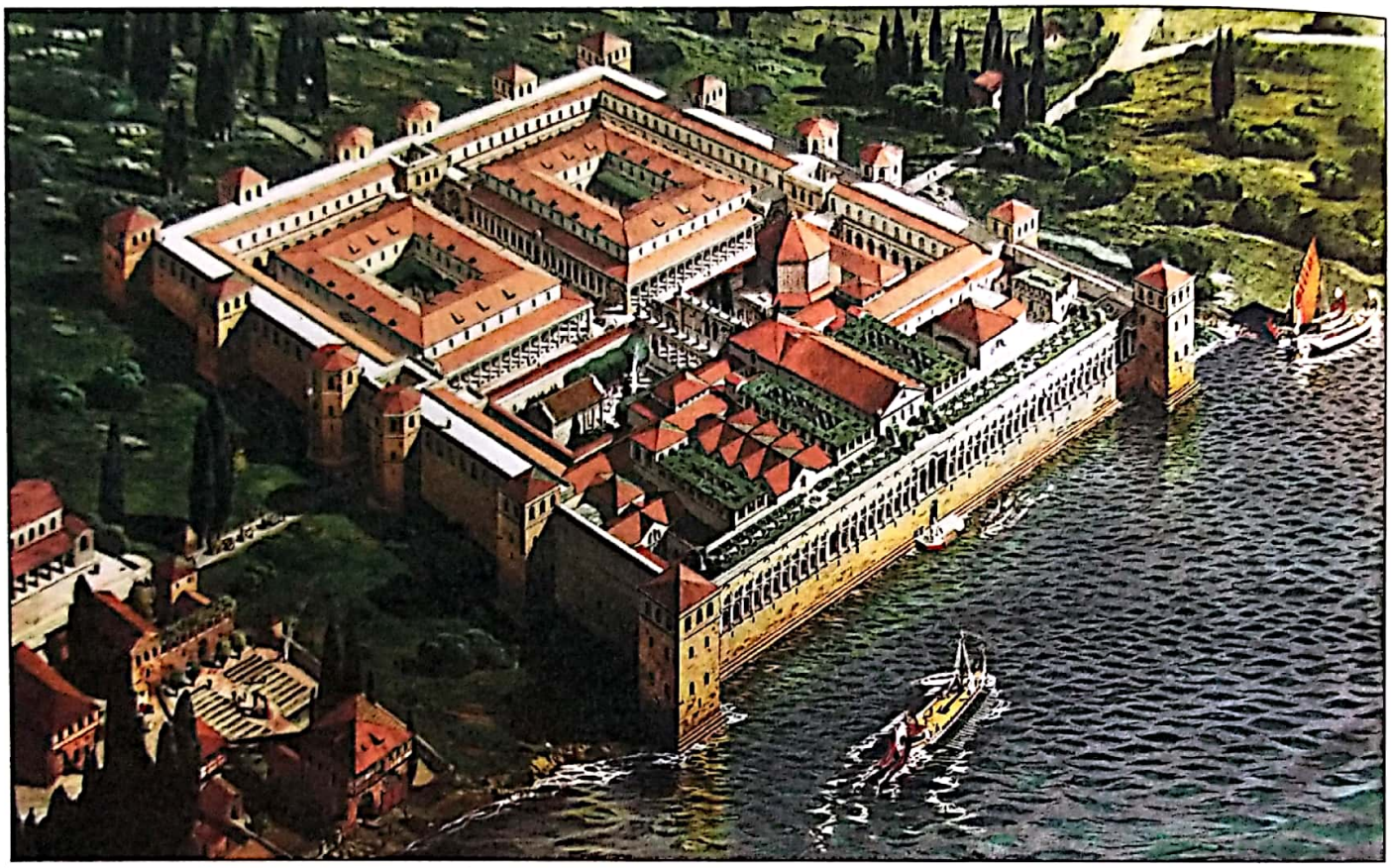
Diocletian's Tetrarchy

17th century CE marble bust of Emperor Gaius Aurelius Valerius Diocletianus (ca.245-313 CE) from Florence, Italy. Image of artifact archived at Château de Vaux-le-Vicomte, France.

In 284 CE, the Roman empire was on the brink of collapse due to war, disease, and economic depression (158 Corcoran). A military commander, Gaius Diocletian, from the Roman province of Dalmatia, became emperor of Rome (159 Nakamura). Bosnia and Herzegovina was under Roman rule, but still caught in power struggles between the Romans and Ilyr.

The Ilyr had come as migrants and invaders to the region, amid growing dissidence in Moesia (Serbia, Bulgaria, Macedonia, and Romania). The multitude of races and tribes living in Moesia, including Thracians, Dacians, Ilyr, and Moesi, were intent on breaking free from generations of Roman rule (160 Chisholm), and Bosnia and Herzegovina served as an unintended but convenient battlefield for this purpose.

Ilyr migration to the region took place in many waves. Some Ilyr tribes settled in areas where they could find suitable habitation, while other tribes went through Bosnia and Herzegovina on their way to the Adriatic coast or across the Adriatic Sea to the eastern coast of the Italian peninsula.



Palace of Roman Emperor Diocletian in Split, Croatia, as depicted by an artist in its original appearance. The palace began as a retirement home for the emperor, but later, an entire city developed within and around it. Illustration by Ernest Hébrard; Public Domain UK/US.

The regional strife in the Balkans reflected nearly five decades of turmoil faced by the Roman empire across its expanse. The empire stretched from Britannia, through Gaul, Hispania, Italy, and parts of the Balkans, the eastern Mediterranean, and Africa, including Egypt. Embroiled in military campaigns against the Sassanids (modern-day Iran) towards the east (156 Potter), and Germanic chiefs in the north (161 Barnes), the empire was quickly depleting its capital and resources. The expansion had a great cost, and revenues from new territory were slow, forcing a devaluation in the empire's currency.

Roman leaders were assassinated and replaced by illegitimate proxies more than two dozen times over a fifty-year period. Rome needed a stabilizing leader, and Diocletian stepped up to the challenge and opportunity. A descendant of an Ilyr family that allied with the Romans, Diocletian was well positioned to return stability to the empire. To run his vast expanse, and mitigate the threat of assassination (156 Potter), Diocletian built a *tetrarchy* (162 Bowman), a form of government where power is shared among four leaders—the emperor and three related, chosen co-emperors (163 Southern), each of whom rules a designated geographic region (164 Corcoran). The co-emperors needed to be, in some way, related (165 Williams) to each other.

This form of government gave the emperors control across the empire. It allowed each emperor to focus on his region and collaborate on matters that impacted the entire empire. It also ensured that rivals, who contended against them, could not usurp power by assassinating (156 Potter) one of them. If one of the emperors was assassinated, the other three would extend their power to cover the territory of the assassinated leader, rendering the assassination fruitless. When Rome was suffering due to instability in its leadership, the *tetrarchy* proved to be an effective strategy.

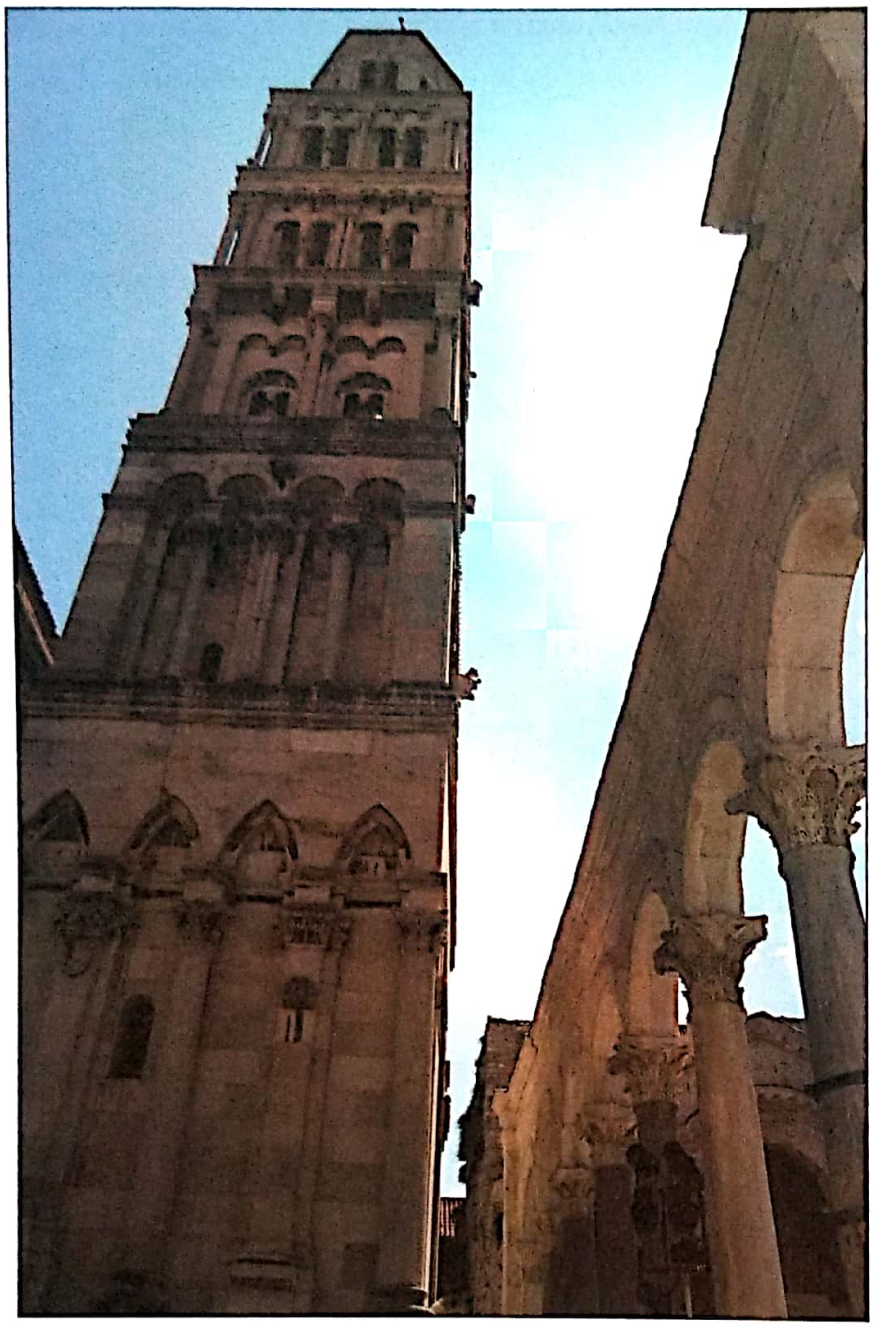
Diocletian returned the empire to peace and ensured stability (156 Potter). He centralized political authority even though it was opposed by the masses. To counter resistance, Diocletian manipulated and rewrote history, to portray himself, and the other *tetrarchs*, as restorers of Roman glory (166 Millar). Among the many themes revised by Diocletian, one that affected Bosnians and Herzegovinians, was that they were descendants of the Ilyr who were defeated and conquered by Romans.

Diocletian appointed Maximian (161 Barnes) co-emperor. Maximian was a military tactician from Sremska Mitrovica (Vojvodina), then an area of *Illyricum*. His son married Diocletian's daughter, Valeria. To ensure the alliance, Diocletian declared Maximian his "brother," and the two co-rulers adopted "sons", Constantius (161 Barnes), a governor from Dalmatia, and Galerius, a military leader also from Sremska Mitrovica. The willingness of the "sons" within the tetrarchy, to rule through military power and action, brought a sense of permanency to the empire, allowing Diocletian time and resources to address the challenges of the increasing diversity within the empire.

Diocletian created four provincial zones of governance. Aligning with those zones, early Christian sects organized and coalesced into parallel regions of ecclesiastic authority (167 Gonzalez). For the tetrarchy, the distributed church became difficult to control. In some zones, the church grew in power and influence, while in other areas, its power was restricted by imperial authority (167 Gonzalez). Diocletian delegated Galerius Caesar to curb the church by stepping up persecution, destroying church property, and punishing clergy (161 Barnes).

On the Bosnian side of the Adriatic, Diocletian ordered the execution of Domnio, the Bishop of Salona, the modern day town of Solin in Dalmatia. Christian sects from Bosnia and Herzegovina established a church in Salona, which was an affront to Diocletian, who was born near Salona. Diocletian had the Bishop executed in public as a warning to all who resisted his rule.

Reacting to these sweeping tactics by the Romans, and continually wrestling with theological controversies among sects, Christian leaders called for councils (168 Wilhelm), or *synods*, that were modeled after the councils of the apostles (169 Butler). A *synod* brings together religious leaders to decide on important church matters. The first synod was held two decades earlier in Antioch (present-day Turkey) in 264 CE, to achieve shared understanding of the nature of Jesus.



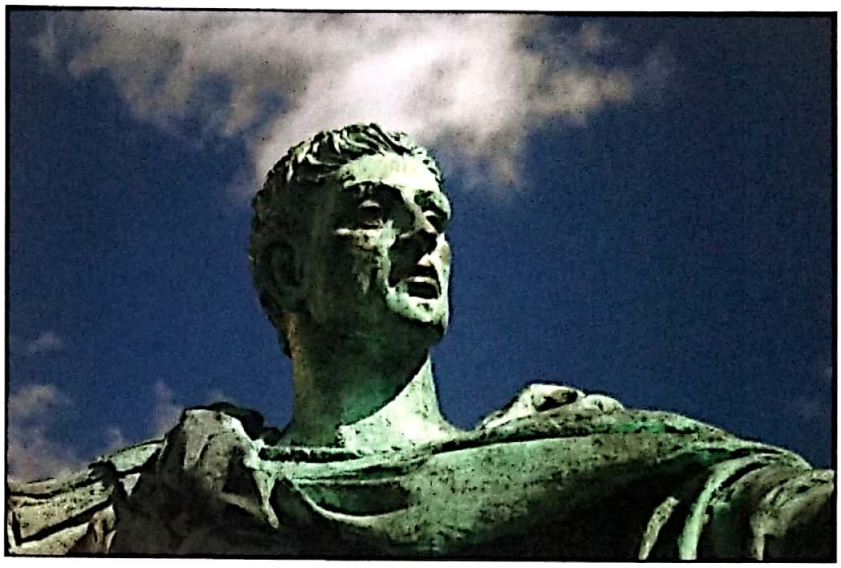
Restored remains of Diocletian's mosoleum in Split, Croatia, which was later consecrated as the Cathedral of Saint Dominus in the 7th century CE named after Dominus, the Bishop of Solin that Diocletian had executed in public. Photo: © 2018 Irfan Mirza.

The synod did not include Christians from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Over the next five years, the council met thirty times, to reach some level of agreement on beliefs. During Diocletian's rule, church leaders repurposed synods to find ways to survive.

An unexpected outcome of the frequent and numerous synods was that the council became a centralized seat of church power among many of the sects. This consolidation of power caused smaller and fringe churches to distance themselves from the council. Churches that had theological differences that the councils had not resolved (170 Chapman), such as the *Monophysites*, pure ascetics, and others, were the first to depart from council guidance.

In May, 305 CE, Diocletian retired from imperial office, leaving the empire to Constantius and Maximian. Some scholars state that Constantius secretly converted to Christianity but continued to feign paganism. He took a consort, a Christian named Helena from Greece (171 Lieu). Helena likely influenced Constantius' thinking and was later canonized. **Under the rule of Constantius and Maximian, edicts against Christians diminished in severity and impact.** Centuries later, Serbian mythology would remember Diocletian as *"Dukljan," the adversary of God* (172 Kulišić). In contrast, Christian history would see his successor, Constantius, as a force of positive change (173 Southern).

Constantine's Era



Statue of Roman Emperor Constantine in York, England.

After the death of Constantius in 306 CE, his son with Helena, Constantine, was acclaimed emperor by the Roman army in Eboracum (modern-day York), in Britannia, where Constantine was a commander. Constantine took control of an empire that had grown beyond its leaders' capacity to govern. The empire had overspent in expansion and was being pulled between its eastern and western provinces. While the empire succeeded at keeping enemies in check, a new threat was developing from Christian believers, who were suppressed by previous rulers.

By 324 CE, Constantine had led Roman legions to victories against internal and external opponents of the empire and solidified his rule over both eastern and western provinces (174 Bowder). To improve governance and ensure longevity of his rule, Constantine enacted reforms to restructure public administration and establish civil authority over the military.

He established monetary policy to uplift the economy that had suffered due to the Romans' use of *fiat currency* to fund growth. The policy was supported by increased silver mining activity in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in places such as Srebrenica, a town named for its rich silver mining. The word *srebro* in Bosnian means silver. The Romans established silver mines along the Dinaric Alps and in Central Bosnia in places like Ilidža, as well as in Eastern Bosnia.

Fiat Currency

Fiat currency *is established by government as legal tender* (177 Mankiw). *Its basis is a declaration of its monetary value by a government* (178 Rollins). *It is not based on the value of physical goods, which are called commodities.* ***Fiat money*** *is neither convertible nor fixed in value by an objective or measurable standard* (179 Keynes).

In contrast, ***commodity money*** *is based on physical goods of value, often precious metals, such as gold or silver.* ***Representative money*** *places a claim on physical goods or commodity money. Constantine's* ***solidus*** *was commodity currency as it was minted on standard gold pieces, 72 of which made a pound of gold, meaning the* ***solidus*** *had physical value.*

Via Argentaria

Roman mosaic dating to the 4th century CE found at the archeological site in Skelani in the Municipality of Srebrenica. Photo courtesy of the Commission to Preserve National Monuments of the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Romans established a number of precious metal mines in Bosnia and Herzegovina (180 Goldstein). They used slave and nominally-waged labor to conduct mining activities to support the burgeoning expenses and debt of their expansive empire. They setup mints in Solana (modern-day Solin in Croatia) and Sirmium (later Srem or Sremska Mitrovica in northern Serbia) to melt and refine the ore (181 Šebečić).

To transport the precious metals, mostly silver, but also some gold, through Bosnia and Herzegovina, they established a route that became known as Via Argentaria, or the Silver Road (180 Goldstein). This road was used to transport ore, raw materials and minted metals and coins during medieval times, from mines east of Ilidža (181 Šebečić), modern-day Butmir at Sarajevo airport, and towns such as Argentium (later renamed Srebrenica) and surrounding or nearby villages such as Domavia and Skelani. Archeological digs at some of these sites have uncovered rich Roman mosaics that attest to the wealth amassed by the Roman masters as they drove legions of slaves and workers to mine silver, lead, zinc and iron ore for the Roman Empire.

By some historical contrast, it is ironic that the natural and human resources of Bosnia and Herzegovina were used to transform and fortify the currency of the mighty Roman Empire. Today, with Bosnia and Herzegovina's depleted resources, the country's present-day currency, the Konvertibilna marka (182 Central) (convertible Mark), is a fiat currency that is determined and only guaranted in value by European nations.

The surge in commodities and access to vast supplies of precious metals in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and in Sirmium in modern-day Serbia, resulted in a commodity-based coin, the *solidus*, which was based on gold and silver and remained the standard for Byzantine currencies for a millennium.

Nicaene Council

An early 16th century CE fresco of the Nicaene Council from 325 CE, at the Sistine Chapel, Vatican.

In 325 CE, upon the advice of Hosius, Constantine summoned a *synod* at Nicaea (present-day Iznik, Turkey), to resolve differences between church sects. Nicaea was chosen as the location for the synod as it was convenient for the Eastern churches, whose participation was critical (184 Schaff).

Constantine invited over 1,800 bishops, although only 300 showed up. He financed the synod and arranged travel and lodging for participants from each episcopal *see* (187 Schaff). Constantine presided over the proceedings, focusing on Arius' teachings and listening to counter-arguments that were prepared by Athanasius, an assistant to the head of the Alexandrian church, the influential and popular Bishop Alexander (188 Armstrong). Arius and Athanasius were not allowed in the chambers as they were not bishops.

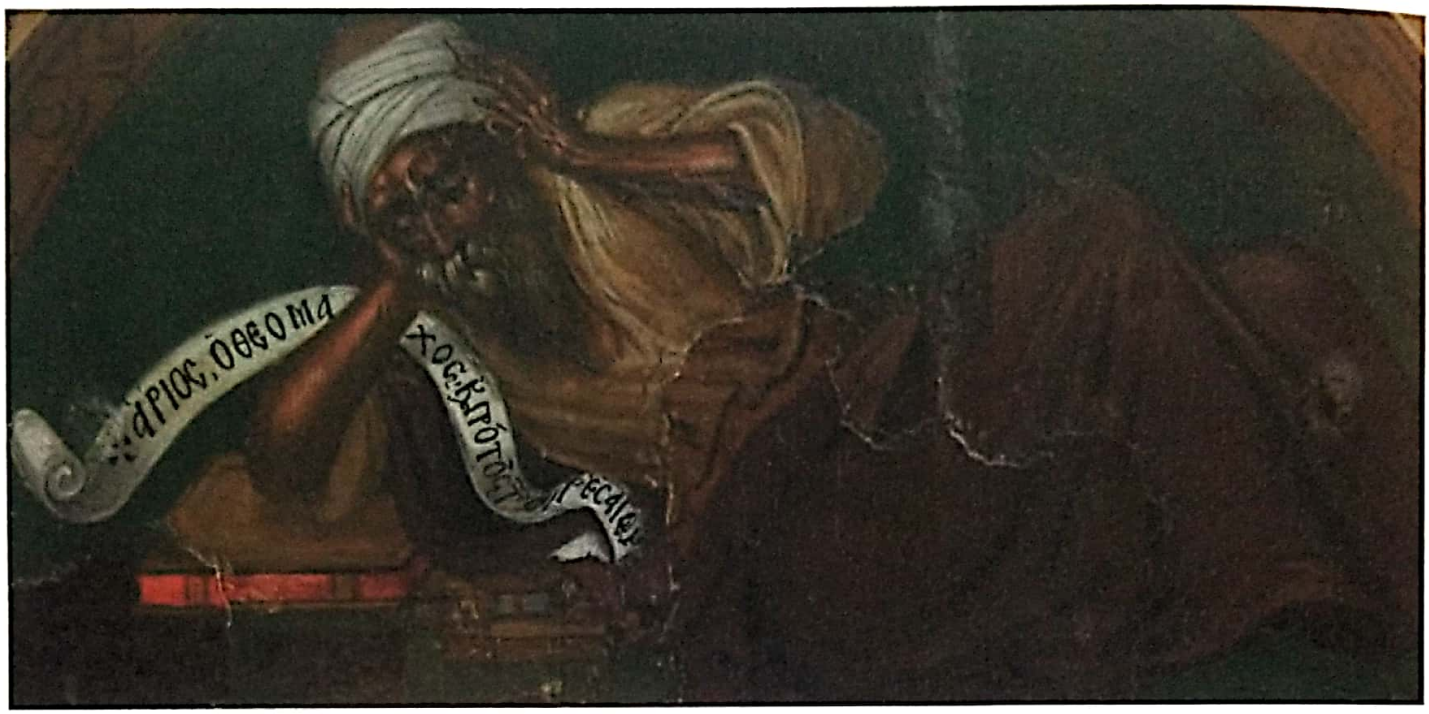
After six days of debate, the council remained undecided. Constantine faced a dilemma where his sponsorship of the synod was headed for apparent failure. Constantine elected to favor Athanasius' view that Jesus was "begotten, not made," and he settled the matter of substance by proposing that Jesus and God were of the "same substance."

Greek iconography of canonized Saints Constantine and Helen. Some scholars state that Constantine converted to Christianity to gain favor of the Christian god as one of many, fundamentally violating monotheism.

However, the bishops were not convinced on the latter point. Constantine had to exercise some level of imperial authority to bring the council to conclusion. He was able to overwhelm or pressure all but two bishops to sign on to his proposed creed (189 Britannica).

Constantine had many accomplishments and notable achievements outside of the council. He was able to rename the city of Byzantium to Constantinople and make it the capital of the empire, as well as its most important center for trade, government, philosophy and the arts. He introduced laws so that his progeny could succeed him in ruling the empire, which replaced the rule of the *tetrarchicy, a* model of governance with *dynastic succession* that was established by Diocletian. To mitigate revolt from over-worked slaves in gold and silver mines, such as those in Srebrenica in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Constantine declared Sunday a day of rest (190 Frier) and favored the Julian solar calendar over the Hebrew lunar calendar (191 Richardson). Constantine also built the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, on top of the *Second Temple,* which was, up to that point, the center of Jewish worship in Jerusalem. Jews believe the *Second Temple* was rebuilt by King Herod of Judea. Constantine justified his action to raze the temple based on Helena, his mother's claim that she had discovered the tomb of Jesus there (192 Pringle).

POST-NICAENE PERIOD



Arian of Alexandria, also known as Arius. Image: 1591 iconic painting depicting Arian at the First Council of Nicaea by Byzantine painter Michael Damaskinos.

Constantine had provided Christianity with a doctrine that codified the scriptural presentation of Jesus as the "Son of God," while preserving traditional Christian belief handed down from the apostles (167 Gonzalez). But the doctrine didn't explicitly ascribe ***divinity*** to Jesus. Additionally, the council at Nicaea didn't address the issue of the *Trinity* or the *Holy Spirit* (193 Fairbairn) as it was understood by later churches, which remained the dominant doctrinal issue among Christian churches, until the 381 CE *synod* in Constantinople. The Nicaean council did not express Christ's ***deity***, which was claimed by the Bishop of Rome, who additionally insisted on having ecclesiastical authority over all Christian regions or *sees* (194 Nichols).

For five decades after the Nicaean council, the *sees* continued disagreeing on major theological and scriptural positions about Jesus' **divinity** and **deity**, often resulting in violence and carnage. Some historians point out that more Christian blood was shed by Christians between 342 and 343 CE, than by pagans persecuting Christians (195 Durant). The violence led to an exodus of Christians who had accepted the Nicaean position, which did not declare Jesus as a ***deity***, or part of the *Holy Spirit*, or the *Trinity*. These Christians had followed the teachings of the Apostles and emissaries who had brought Jesus' oral traditions. To the degree that they could, they adhered to church decisions and rulings, especially those that came out of Nicaea. Many of these Christians didn't know that a controversy

was brewing beyond the chambers of the Nicaean synod. That controversy placed the Bishop of Alexandria, one of the most powerful figures in Christendom, against the Bishop of Rome, the church councils, and various emperors of Byzantium.

Counter to post-Nicaean Christianity was the rival view of Arian Christianity. The points of contention between the two pivoted around the nature of Jesus and incarnation. Arianism contended that Jesus was a being created by God and inferior to God. Additionally, Arianism did not accept that God assumed human nature in the form of Jesus, the Son of God. Arianism was finally defeated across most of Europe by the 7th century CE with the conversion of the Gothic kingdoms to post-Nicaean Christianity. Views that did not align to post-Nicaean declarations became heresies.

At the Constantinople synod, Theodosius, then emperor of Rome, appointed Constantinople's prominent archbishop, Gregory of Nazianzus, to preside over the council (196 McGuckin). Theodosius declared Christianity the empire's official religion (197 Kaylor), so his approval at the council was important. Nazianzus fell ill and was replaced by Nectarius (198 Sinclair), a magistrate who was quickly baptized and made president.

Up to that point, Nectarius wax only a *catechumen*, a student who was being instructed in the principles of the Christian faith. Nectarius did not have experience in ecclesiastical matters, certainly not of this magnitude or complexity. His appointment to preside over the proceedings of the council astonished the council members, who later accepted the appointment. Theodosius made it well-known that he had chosen Nectarius to ensure the support of the residents of Constantinople.

Deity and Divinity

*The concept of **deity** refers to defining Christ as God.*

*In contrast **divinity** refers to ascribing to Christ the attributes of God (Colossians 2:9, Romans 1:20; Epistle to the Colossians from The New Testament)* (200 Cross).

*At the time of the Nicaean council, Jesus was not seen as a **deity**, but as a being of **divinity** or someone with divine characteristics.*

Under Nectarius' inexperienced leadership, the council adopted a doctrine affirming the *Holy Spirit*, a concept that had previously not been clearly stated or recorded in Christian Scripture (199 HarperCollins). Christians have faith in the outcome of the council through the belief that the council, and its members, known as the *Holy Fathers* of the council, were divinely guided.

With this affirmation, both the western and eastern Roman empires embraced the *Trinity*. All other interpretations were declared heretic. Council members hurried from the proceedings to update their creeds and associated liturgy. Christianity had landed on its final construct.

With the declarations of the post-Nicaene councils, the interpretations of Christianity that were dispatched by the Apostles and carried out by emissaries prior to the councils, were about to be earmarked for future conflict. **One such conflict would take place centuries later between Bosnia and Herzegovina's native Christians and the Roman church.**

Nectarius led the church for more than sixteen years. He earned the reputation of being honored as a ***prelate*** of the Christian church. A ***prelate*** is a high-ranking member of the clergy who has achieved his position from an ordinary rank. Since Nectarius was not high in the religious order when he was appointed to head the council, he earned the title of *prelate.*

Emperor Constantine ordering the condemnation of Arian "heretics" and the burning of all texts . Image is a drawing on vellum from Biblioteca Capitolare, Vercelli, a compendium of canon law from northern Italy produced circa 825 CE. Photo: James Steakley.

Nectarius supervised the canons of the Second Ecumenical Council, in which he established the 3rd canon declaring that "...the Bishop of Constantinople shall hold the first rank after the Bishop of Rome, beause Constantinople is the new Rome." With this canon, Nectarius appeased Rome while checking the other patriarchates, and he maintained Constantinople's position in the Eastern Empire. However, Rome didn't act upon the canon until 1439 CE. **This resulted in a seed of dissention that would later form the basis of a schism between the churches of the two parts of the empire. This schism would straddle over the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina for its duration.**

After Constantine's death in 337 CE, his son Constantius II, who ruled over the eastern half of the Empire, revived Arianism and tried to reverse the Nicaene Creed (201 Kelly). He appointed his advisor, Eusebius of Nicomedia, the Bishop of Constantinople, with the hope of regaining control of the religious communities and bringing back the western half of the Empire under his rule.

Council of Chalcedon

Artist's vision of scene at the Chalcedonian Council. Painting by Vasily Surikov, 1876 CE.

When the ecumenical church council of Christians met in 451 CE in Chalcedon, the *Monophysites* who were present at the council rejected the position of the Council of Chalcedon, which proclaimed diophysitism (also *dyophysitism*)—that Christ had dual natures (202 Kelly). This dissention created a schism between the Oriental and Western and Eastern Orthodox churches. Western and Eastern Orthodox church representatives came together to agree on a compromise, with the Oriental church on an idea known as *miaphysitism* (203 Parry). *Miaphysitism* ascribed a dual nature to Christ, unified as divine and human, which most representatives accepted.

However, some Christian churches, such as the Chaldeans and Assyrians, rejected it. The dissenting churches insisted that Jesus was two beings, the divine (Logos) and the human (Jesus). Nonetheless, since most churches accepted the Chalcedonian compromise that Jesus was a single person with two natures, the dissidents brought about the first break within the church (204 Meyendorff). Soon after the decision to embrace *miaphysitism* was reached at Chalcedon, Christian church leaders began the arduous task of evangelizing and revising their liturgy and canon to accurately reflect the change. By the time of the council, Christianity had reached the farthest outposts of the Byzantine Empire, burdening church leaders with a compelling mission to send emmisaries to share news of the changes and provide ways to update Christian ideology across established and newly forming parishes.

Monophysitism, Diophysitism & Miaphysitism

Monophysitism *is a Christian position that Jesus had only a single nature, human with divine characteristics.*

Diophysitism *held that, after Incarnation, Jesus had two natures, divine and human (203 Parry). Chalcedonian doctrine deemed* ***monophysitism*** *as heretic.*

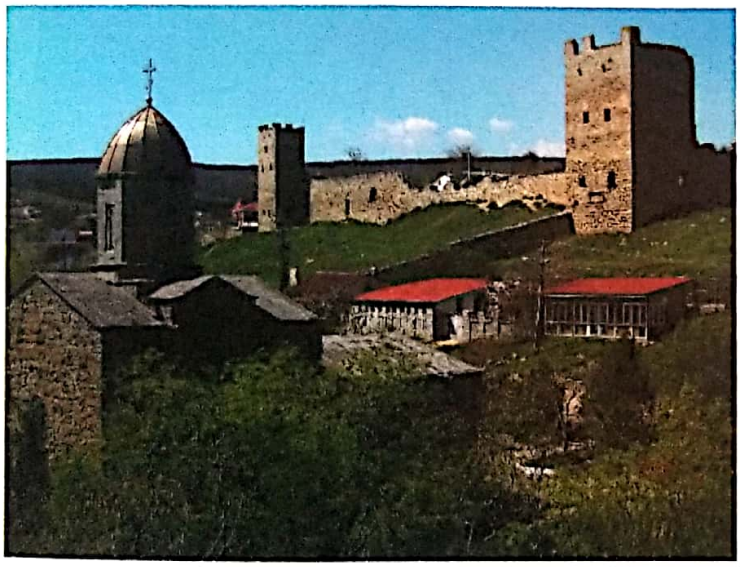
To execute on such a broad mission, church leaders prioritized larger parishes within their episcopal regions. The smaller parishes and more distant churches were a lower priority and received the news later. Churches that were closer to the Bosphorus were easier to reach. Those that were farther, required much longer travel times and more risk on the journey. Even with sentries as escorts, church emmisaries faced danger from barbarians and warring tribes. Nomads and warrior tribes continued to menace travel routes, especially in Byzantium's hinterlands.

Christian groups who were too distant or small to be included in Chalcedon, did not have the benefit of learning about the discussion or decisions reached at Chalcedon. The emissaries, who had already left the region of the Bosphorus, where Chalcedon was situated, were not aware of the Chalcedonian decision that Jesus was "*perfect as God and human*" or that he was "*god and man.*"

As those emissaries found converts, they preached the only form of Christianity that they knew, *monophysitism*. There was considerable latency between the departure of these emissaries and the arrival of the new or post-Chalcedonian Christian doctrine. Early Christians in Bosnia and Herzegovina were mostly *monophysites* because that is the interpretation that was delivered to them by early Christian evangelists. Post-Chalcedonian Christianity didn't reach Bosnia and Herzegovina until well after Rome gained full authority over most episcopal sees. The Christians in Bosnia and Herzegovina did not know the details of decisions made at Chalcedon. **When news of the Chalcedonian judgments reached Bosnia and Herzegovina's Christians, they were faced with a dilemma: to continue in the beliefs they were taught by early evangelists (205 Brockett)—who were followers of the Apostles—or to convert to the new doctrine without the benefit of council.**

Goths, Ostrogoths & Huns

The Ostrogoth and Visigoth were the eastern and western branches of the Germanic tribes of Goth. The Goth were a group of diverse Germanic tribes that came together around the Vistula River in the region around modern-day Poland (206 Gibbon). These tribes migrated from Gotland in Scandinavia, which is how they got their name, and rose to power in an area north of the Black Sea (207 Mark). The name Ostrogoth described Goth who were "glorified by the rising sun," meaning Goth in the east, and Visigoth were Goth who went west.



Remains of the fortress of Theodosius in Genoa, Italy.

In the 3rd and 4th centuries CE, the Goth settled along the Danube and Rhine Rivers (207 Mark), as well as the north coast of the Black Sea, and parts of Moesia and Asia Minor (208 Wolfram). Around 370 CE, they were overrun by the Huns, an invading group of equestrian warriors from Central Asia (209 Pohl). The Huns later became famously known for their leader, **Attila the Hun,** who ransacked much of Eastern Europe, plundered the Balkans, and instilled fear in both the Eastern and Western Roman empires. Attila attacked Rome and Constantinople, but his forces were repelled in each capital (210 Howarth). **The Goth who evaded the Hun likely took refuge in Bosnia and Herzegovina as the territory was in their direct escape path.**

Byzantine emperor Theodosius paid the Huns a tribute to keep them from attacking. This temporary respite allowed the Ostrogoth to migrate to *Moesia Inferior*, between Bulgaria and Romania, along the Black Sea. Theodosius' successor, Marcian, stopped the payments, and consolidated his forces to protect Constantinople and the Eastern empire (211 Babcock). That left parts of the Roman Empire open to attacks by the Huns (211 Babcock). It created opportunities for the Ostrogoth to expand southward into Moesia, Asia Minor and Ilyricum (212 Waldman), including Bosnia and Herzegovina. More importantly, it divided the Roman empire into two domains, the Eastern and Western Empires, with Bosnia and Herzegovina languishing between the two.

The polarization between eastern and western domains of the Empire set the stage for political division, which would eventually result in the split of the empire and its churches.

Totila of the Goths destroys the city of Florence, Italy.

The military superiority of the Huns' forced the Ostrogoth to flee to Moesia (212 Waldman) while some took refuge in Byzantine-ruled Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Ostrogoth entered a treaty with Byzantine Emperor Leo the Thracian to stay in the empire. To seal the deal, a ten-year-old Ostrogoth Prince named Theodoric was sent to Constantinople, as hostage to be raised among Byzantine elites.

Theodoric was born in Pannonia, in present-day Austria, among a proud people who claimed the defeat of the Huns in 454 CE (205 Wolfram). After Attila's death, the Ostrogoth marched against the Huns, whose empire had been divided among Attila's three sons. Attila's closest advisor, King Ardaric of the Gepids decided to wage war against Attila's sons. The Gepids were an East Germanic Goth tribe. Ardaric was joined by other Germanic armies, including the Goth, alongside the Alans (hailing from an area north of present-day Iran), and others, who had previously been subjugated by

Attila. The coalition of forces overran the Huns, only to find competition among themselves for leadership.

The Ostrogoth prevailed and set their sights on reinstating their kingdom in Eastern Byzantium. In response, the Byzantine stepped up persecution against the Ostrogoth. From his seat in the capitol, Theodoric saw the Byzantine treat the Ostrogoth as barbarians, which led the young heir to develop an unfavorable impression of his erstwhile captor-benefactors (206 Gibbon).

Upon reaching the age of majority, Theodoric returned to his people. However, after a fallout with Leo, Theodoric rallied Ostrogoth forces and ravaged the Balkans, where his forces were strong. He secured sufficient power and control to enable as many as 250,000 Ostrogoth to migrate to the Italian peninsula, with a view to establish the Ostrogoth kingdom (213 Mathisen), this time in the territory of the Western Roman empire. With the force of sheer numbers, the Ostrogoth settled in Roman territory (213 Mathisen).

Around 450 CE, the Ostrogoth continued to pose a persistent military threat, so the Byzantine agreed to a federated alliance, where the Byzantine empire governed in civilian matters, but left the Ostrogoth in control of the military. In 453 CE, the Ostrogoth marched westward, and conquered the Kingdom of Italy, overrunning Roman sovereignty (214 Amory).

In 493 CE, the Ostrogoth overran Ravenna and Theodoric declared himself the head of the Western Roman Empire. With his power consolidated in the empire, Theodoric reigned over Italy, Sicily, Dalmatia, Pannonia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. As an *Arian*, Theodoric set principles of freedom for Christians, which provided relief for the *monotheistic* and *monophysite* practices of Christianity in the Balkans and in Bosnia and Herzegovina. **However, there is no evidence to suggest that Theodoric influenced or extended *Arianism* into Bosnia and Herzegovina** (215 Brockett, 216 Boškajlo).

Theodoric developed relations with the Bishop of Rome to ensure that the church did not betray him or undermine his rule or expansion of his empire. Under the continued leadership of Theodoric, the Ostrogoth renewed their march westward in 503 CE, overrunning the Vandal King of Gaul (212 Waldman), who had a hold on the Visigoth. Under Theodoric's rule, the Ostrogoth and Visigoth united, but upon Theodoric's death in 526 CE (208 Wolfram), they divided once again.

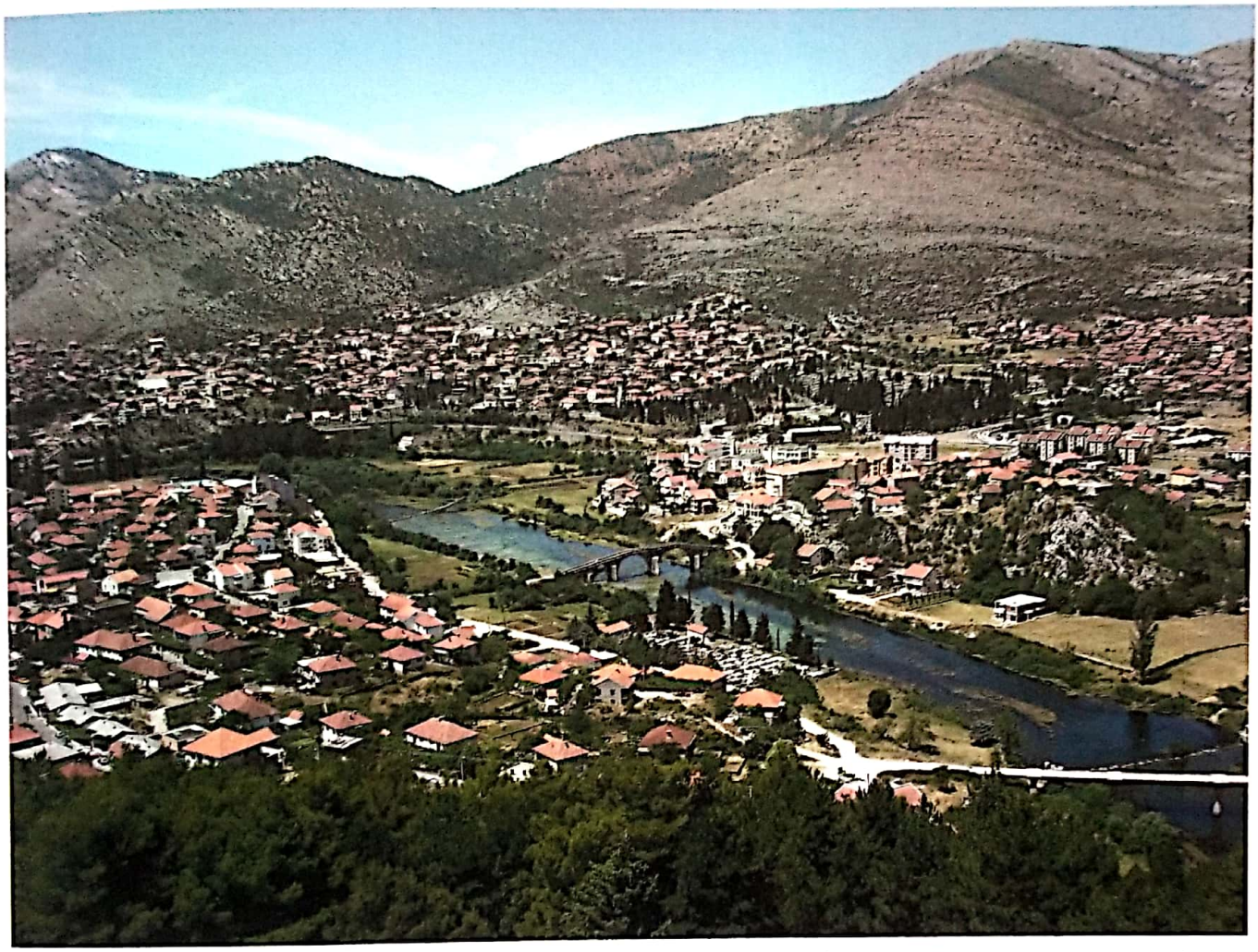
By 535 CE, Byzantine Emperor Justinian I, who had been ruling the Eastern Roman Empire, invaded Ostrogoth-controlled Italy, to reunite the Eastern and Western Roman empires. The Ostrogoth rallied under the leadership of Totila, but after prolonged battles, the Ostrogoth were defeated. **Eventually, the Goths were absorbed into medieval powers** (217 Procopius, 218 Cantor)**, with Bosnia and Herzegovina continuing to languish between the Western and Eastern Roman empires.**

Byzantium

The ruins at the site of Tauresium, the birthplace of Justinian I, in today's Republic of Macedonia.

By the 5th century CE, the split structure of the Roman empire deepened the splinter between the eastern and western regions, forming lines primarily along the Drina River in the east and the Dinaric Alps to the west. During the 5th century CE, the Western Roman Empire fragmented into different kingdoms, while the Eastern Roman Empire remained intact, and became known as the *Byzantine Empire*. **Bosnia and Herzegovina became a critical buffer zone between these two primary branches of the empire, expressing tolerance for both of their churches and policies.**

Between 530 CE and 555 CE, the Byzantine engaged in prolonged wars to take back Rome and Italy from the Ostrogoth. The Byzantine succeeded for a short period under Emperor Justinian I, who restored unity to both empires (219 Fine). However, Justinian could not pull together the churches that had polarized along the same division.

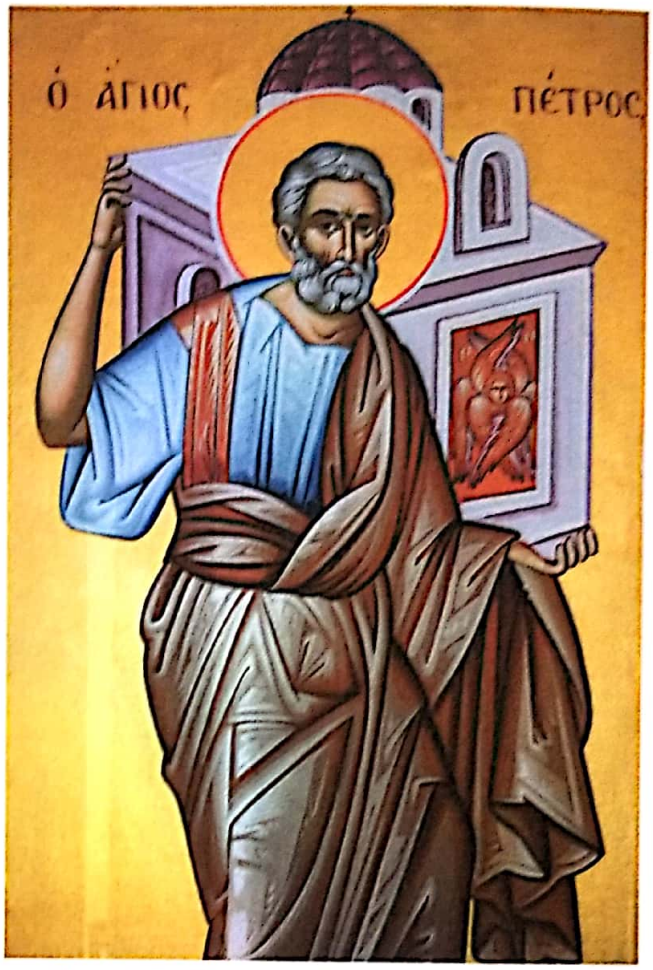


Modern-day city of Trebinje in southern Bosnia and Herzegovina where the first Slav refugees settled.

In the march westward, Justinian took his forces away from Dalmatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Balkans, exposing the territory to attacks by other aspiring invaders, such as the Gepids (220 Todd), who were relatives and former allies of the Ostrogoth from the wars against their common enemy, the Huns (208 Wolfram). The region became fertile grounds for invasion by tribes from the Caucuses.

In the 6th century CE, Byzantine Emperor Heraclius brought groups of slaves, known as the Sclaveni, to defend Dalmatia against persistent invasion (70 Malcolm) by a group from the Caucuses known as the Avar. Heraclius recognized the Sclaveni as a unified tribe, and mentioned them in his doctrine, but he did not attribute them with a territorial homeland.

The Sclaveni later found refuge among Bosnia and Herzegovina's natives living in the territories of Zahumlje (present-day Herzegovina), Pannonia (the region later known as Slavonia) and Travunija (present-day Trebinje) in southern Bosnia and Herzegovina. During their time in this region, the Sclaveni learned the Bosnian-Slavonic dialect of the local Eastern Herzegovinians.



Byzantine style iconographic painting of St. Andrew (l) and St. Peter (r). Both were disciples of Jesus and were sent by him to teach his traditions. It was their influence that reached Bosnia and Herzegovina decades after their mission. Photos: Dimitris Vetsikas, Cyprus.

Over the next few centuries, the Byzantine maintained control of the region, giving in for a short period to the Bulgars (212 Waldman). **Under Bulgar control, more Sclaveni and other groups moved into the region around Bosnia and Herzegovina.**

Sclaveni and other Slav groups have been described in works by Byzantine historians, such as Procopius (circa 500-554 CE) from Palestine, as tall and strong, with a tan complexion and reddish-brown hair. Procopius noted they were nomadic people who lived a rugged and primitive lifestyle, periodically residing in huts distant from each other. John of Ephesus (circa 507-588 CE), head of the Syriac church, described the Slavs as "extremely violent people," who believed in "many gods and one supreme god, Perun, as the head."

The Sclaveni and Slav populations were managed by Byzantine military administrators, who moved able-bodied men around to protect the frontier along the Danube. In 537 CE, Justinian shipped 1,500 Sclaveni troops to support the battle to retake Rome. **Despite the constraints, the Sclaveni and Slav populations grew, as did their potential for revolt.**

Sassanids and Ghassanids

A rock face sculpture at Naqsh-e Rostam, Iran, showing Sassanid ruler Shapur I as he triumphed in victory over Roman Emperor Valerian.

As the Byzantine stabilized and expanded their empire, groups in the region that we know as Iranian and Arabian were on the rise in terms of military strength and influence (221 Shahbazi). They were expanding their territories and influence through trade and political barter. A group from modern-day Iran, known as the Sassanids (also known as Sassanians), came together as a force (222 Cameron) and threatened Byzantine military and trade routes to the east. The Sassanids battled the Romans and Byzantine on and off since about 230 CE when Sassanid Shah Shapur I attacked the Romans under the rule of Alexander Severus (223 Southern).

The Sassanids followed a religious movement known as *Manichaeism*, which was based on a struggle between an enlightened, spiritual world of good, in contrast against an evil, material world of darkness (224 Windgren). The Sassanids faced opposition from the Ghassanids (222 Cameron), a group of Arabs who had emigrated to the Levant from Yemen. With the Sassanids as common enemies, the Ghassanids created an alliance with the Byzantine in battles against the Sassanids.

The Ghassanids were mostly ***Monophysite*** Christians and were regarded as a fringe sect by the Byzantine. In spite of their religious differences, the Ghassanids' value as an ally against the Sassanids, and buffer against Arab Bedouin raiders, dictated Byzantine policy to a loose alliance. In addition to ***Monophysites***, the Byzantine also became accustomed to ***Miaphysite*** Christians in southern parts of the empire, where they also forged relations.

During this time, some Ghassanids emigrated north into Europe (225 Bowersock, 226 Bury) to escape persecution due to their *Monophysite* beliefs. The Ghassanids found Bulgars who were receptive to their ideology, and the two groups remained isolated from Byzantine affairs in the Pontic-Caspian steppe and Volga regions. When the Bulgars finally migrated into the Balkans, they brought with them monotheistic and *Monophysite* ideology. **So, it is most likely that the first exposure that Bosnians and Herzegovinians had to Christianity** (227 Brockett) **was *monotheism* and *Monophysitism* that originated with the Ghassanids and was delivered by early *Monophysite* Bulgar Christians.**

In general, the Bulgars were a Turkic group from western Asia who were expanding their territory westward into Europe. After a series of long journeys and deep interactions with other tribes and races, the Bulgars mixed with Thracian and Vlach tribes as they began to transform from a Turkic-speaking group into a Slavonic-speaking group, living in the Khazar empire. Some scholars believe the Bulgars were two separate groups, one that was Turkic and the other that was Slavonic. In either case, the Slavonic-speaking Bulgars migrated towards the Balkans and settled in the region dominated by the ***Khazar Khaganate***. The ***Khazar Khaganate*** was the empire of semi-nomadic Turkic groups who straddled the Silk Road trading routes between Asia and Europe. The empire was a buffer between the Byzantine and the growing Sassanid empire in Persia. Between the late 7th and early 8th centuries CE, many Khazar converted to Islam and began evangelizing their new-found faith on their travels through Bulgar and Byzantine territory, and possibly Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Monophysites, Diophysites, & Miaphysites

Monophysite *Christians believe that Jesus Christ had only a* ***single nature****, human with divine characteristics* (224 Parry)*. Monophysitism is denied by Miaphysite Christians. Today, very few Christians adhere to monophysite beliefs, but nearly all Muslims accept monophysitism as it relates to Jesus.*

Diophysitism *adheres to a doctrine from Nestorius, the Patriarch of Constantinople from 428 to 431 CE, declaring Jesus had* ***two*** *distinct natures. This doctrine was considered controversial and was eventually rejected by subsequent councils and synods of nearly all branches of Christianity, including all modern churches.*

Miaphysitism *is a set of Christian beliefs that Jesus' divine and human natures are unified in* ***one form*** (224 Parry)*. Neither nature can be separated or altered.* ***Miaphysitism*** *came about as a reaction when* ***Diophysitism*** *was rejected.* ***Miaphysitism*** *was accepted by some sects of the church in the Eastern empire.*

AVAR & SCLAVENI

Avar sword from the period of the Avar Khaganate that extended from modern-day Hungary (where this sword was discovered) to Serbia.

The *Avar*, also known as the *Abaroi*, or *Obri*, were a warring faction that were either a part of the Göktürks or they had been routed by the Göktürks in the Carpathian Mountains. In either case, groups of Avar migrated in large numbers westward to the region of Pannonia (228 Sedov), and further south to parts of Bosnia. In Bosnia, the village of Obre, near Kakanj, likely has an Avar name. As the Avar arrived in the Balkans, they forced scavenger and peasant nomads from areas along their path (229 Pokorny). These nomads had previously squatted on lands abandoned by Germanic tribes (229 Pokorny, 230 Peisker).

Jordannes, a writer of Moesia, wrote in 551 CE about nomads who were routed by the Avar. He wrote there were three ethnic groups (229 Pokorny), the *Venethi*, *Antes*, and *Sclaveni*, who made their way into the Balkans and roamed an area that he called *Getica*. These are the people we refer to as the Slavs in today's terminology. However, they didn't settle in *Getica*, the land of the Goth. They roamed between present-day Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Montenegro, Slavonia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Drawing of Avar plundering Balkan lands (Avari pljene balkanske zemlje). Image K. Mandrović (1885).

The *Venethi* mixed with Germanic and Baltic tribes (231 Stocki) from the north and became known as the West Slavs.The *Antes* became East Slavs as they combined with Ugric and Balt (232 Raymond) nomads, who had acquired culture from the *Kazhars* (233 Skržinskaja). The *Sclaveni* combined with other races as South Slavs, creating a mixed breed that included Ilyr, Dacien, Thracian, Pannonian, Paeonian, and some Helenic (234 Mirabal) races.

After many groups of Sclaveni arrived in the Balkans, they began campaigns of raiding villages that were under control and protection of the Byzantine. When the Sclaveni raids got out of hand, the Byzantine formed an alliance with the Avar (235 Zickel), who had already conquered numerous races and tribes along their journey from central Asia. A goal of the alliance was to push the *Sclaveni* away from Byzantine centers of commerce and economy.

With support from Constantinople, a tidal wave of Avar warriors reached the Balkans in 560 CE, with 20,000 infantry and equestrian soldiers (233 Skržinskaja). The Avar had acquired military command and knowledge through prolonged skirmishes with the Göktürks and had the skill to wage

war from horseback just like the Göktürks. This equestrian ability gave the Avar considerable advantage over the Sclaveni tribal and nomadic defensive structures. The Sclaveni, in comparison, were no match for the Avar; they were not practiced at waging war on horseback, and they were scattered throughout the territory. In early clashes, the Sclaveni quickly capitulated.

Many Sclaveni escaped the onslaught by taking refuge in a vast region that spanned present-day Bulgaria, Romania and parts of an area known as Zahumlje (236 Hupchick) **(also known as Zahumlija).** Named after the mountain Hum, Zahumlija was the name of a geographical region that covered modern day Herzegovina and parts of Dalmatia. In Zahumlja, Sclaveni refugees hid in forests and mountainsides—an environment that they were already comfortable with through their ancestral journey from eastern Europe (229 Pokorny, 235 Zickel). **The Sclaveni made temporary homes and adapted by quickly absorbing the Bosnian Southern Slavonic dialect, since it was close in structure to their ancestral proto-language. As the Avar threat diminished, many *Sclaveni* left Zahumlja, taking the Bosnian language with them. Other Sclaveni remained in Zahumlja or migrated to other parts of Bosnia or Dalmatia.**

The Sclaveni were attacked repeatedly by Avar warriors who possessed superior military tactics, weapons, and skills. The Avar captured Sclaveni women and had children with them. Archeological digs of Avar gravesites turned up remains of Sclaveni female DNA. The digs also revealed the Avar did not have a written script of any form. Scholars cannot agree on whether the Avar had a single language (237 Waldman). Some scholars suggest the Avar spoke a language rooted in Turkic (235 Price) while others favor an Avar proto language. **In any case, the captured Sclaveni women brought the Bosnian Slavonic dialect to the Avar and taught it to their children.**

In addition to invasions by the Avar, the region's Sclaveni and other Slav tribes faced challenges by the Huns, Gepids, and Bulgars. Many Sclaveni and Slavs were enslaved by the Byzantine (233 Skržinskaja) **and put to work in mines. Sclaveni and Slavs who evaded capture returned to Zahumlje for refuge. This was the first major incursion of Slavs into Bosnia and Herzegovina.**

The mix of Avar and Sclaveni populations and gene pool likely resulted in unexpected benefits for both groups. The Avar-Sclaveni offspring picked up the Southern Bosnian Slavonic dialect, enabling them to communicate with a broader population, and increase their tribe's overall literacy levels. Along with acquiring this important dialect, the offspring gained a diversity of ideas and cultural knowledge from both lineages. The Sclaveni learned from the behavior of the Avar, and developed military structure and discipline, like their Avar foe (238 Curta), as did their other Slav compatriots. **The new breed of Avar-Slav and Avar-Sclaveni offspring were in an advantageous position to negotiate alliances between the groups** (239 James) **or wage brutal wars. The offspring must have seemed like a novelty to each group since they could speak a similar dialect** (240 Price).

Slavs

Sclaveni settlement along the Danube. Newspaper xylograph from the 19th century CE.

Groups later known as Slavs made their way to Bosnia and Herzegovina, from the area of the Carpathian Mountains, the Danube River and the Black Sea. They were described by *Procopius* in 545 CE as "barbarians" who believed in "the maker of lightening," "a god to whom they made sacrifice" (241 Procopius). *Procopius* was a 6th century CE Byzantine historian from Palestine, who wrote about Emperor Justinian's wars and reign.

The Slavs came to the Balkans, and to Bosnia and Herzegovina, in several waves (86 Malyarchuk), first as refugees and slaves (78 Sedov), and later as invaders (236 Hupchick). During the invasion period, Bosnia saw attacks from Slavs, Avar, and the new mixed breed of paternally-Avar Slavs. The Slavs were previously invaded by the Avar, but ultimately, the two groups joined forces against the Byzantine. Through osmosis and knowledge absorption, the Slavs learned warfare from the Avar and mounted raids and campaigns of their own against other unsuspecting neighbors, that included communities

in Bosnia and Herzegovina. While the early Slav invasions were tribal raids, Slavs eventually began the systematic disenfranchisement and displacement of locals as they settled in their villages.

Up to that point, the Slavs had not formed a unified community. Instead, they resided in smaller groups spread throughout the region, mostly in territories previously held by others. This distribution left Slavs vulnerable to attack by invaders as they could not form a cohesive or continuous defensive territory. However, the broad and scattered distribution also allowed remote and distant communities of Slavs to evade even the most ruthless invasions against the more clustered Slavic tribes.

It wasn't until the 5th century CE that Slavic nomads started acquiring territory (233 Skržinskaja) **and forming settlements and communities. This placement of Slav groups in the historical timeline provides an important clarification about the communities of Bosnia and Herzegovina that were formed well ahead of the Slav migrations by several centuries.**

It should be noted that the Slavs weren't always weak or fragmented. They came together during the reign of Byzantine Emperor Justinian I (527-565 CE), when they rallied 100,000 troops, supported by Avar warriors, to raid the Western Balkans and Thessalonica (236 Hupchick). They plundered Thrace in 545 CE, and in 551 CE, they crossed Niš and ended up in Dalmatia. By 577 CE, Slav soldiers marched into Thrace and Ilyricum, where they pillaged every town in their path, annihilating non-Slavs, and misappropriating Ilyr lands for their own settlements (242 Bury).

Between 614 and 617 CE, groups of mixed Avar-Slavs around Macedonia united under the leadership of a Sclaveni Slav named *Hacon* (pronounced *Hatzon*) and attacked Thessalonica. The group was known as *Vujenici (Vujenitsi)*, which is a derivation of *vojnici* (plural) or *vojnik*, the Slavonic word for soldier or warrior (243 Pearce). Their attack was repelled by the city's defense forces, so the Slavs sent for Avar reinforcements (244 Fine, 245 Pohl).

When the Avar arrived, even their combined strength was insufficient to overrun the city. After suffering great losses, including the near-total destruction of their naval attack capability, the repelled Avar-Slav forces retreated, regrouped and went on a rampage against weaker Byzantine outposts. They forced locals to abandon their villages in the Epirus region of Greece where the Slavs made a temporary home for themselves. From there, they continued their charge to expand their territory and secure for themselves a more permanent homeland.

By the early 7th century CE, the Avar-Slav tribes were spread throughout Macedonia, Dalmatia and parts of Zahumlja (an area that covered most of Herzegovina), once again scattering their tribes throughout the region (219 Fine). **The Slav dream of a permanent homeland continued to elude them.**

Origins of Slavs

Pirpet marshland in a 19th century CE painting by artist Ivan Šiškin, 1889.

The history of the earliest Slavs is primarily noted in Byzantine journals, beginning well after the 6th century CE. The Byzantine historian, *Procopius*, portrayed Slavs as unusually tall and strong. He described them as people who lived in remote huts, "distant from one another, frequently changing place of abode" (217 Procopius), in other words, nomadic tribes. This description of the Slavs as generally nomadic gives rationale to why the Slavs migrated across such a wide territory.

Before the Slavs arrived in Central Europe, the Avar had joined forces with Germanic tribes from Southern Scandinavia, known as the Longbards or Lombards. The Avar-Lombard coalition expelled the Gepids (246 Makkai), from the Carpathian Plain. The abandoned Gepid lands became available for Slav settlement, paving the path for Slav migration to the Balkans (247 Norwich).

Byzantine Deacon John of Ephesus described a subgroup of Slavs, that he characterized as South Slavs, and noted they were "extremely violent people" (248 John). In his treatise, the Deacon stated the Slavs believed in many gods, and possibly a supreme God, *Perun*, who created lightning and ruled over other gods. The Deacon's description appears biased against a race that he saw as invasive, and it was certainly made before the Slavs embraced Eastern Orthodox Christianity.

Artist Sergey Ivanov's 1908 painting depicting the hard life of medieval East Slavs.

A Byzantine military strategy book, known as the *Strategikon of Maurice*, described the South Slavs as disorganized and leaderless (249 Aron). Other texts indicate they made their homes in forests and wetlands (250 Fouracre), which reinforces the origins of the Slav people in the Pirpet Marshlands in Bélarus (251 Fine).

Other perspectives place the Slavs as diverse groups who came together in an area between the Bug and Dniepr rivers (252 Fine), from areas around Bélarus and Ukraine. There isn't much evidence to place an exact origin or source of the Slavs, but there is general agreement that Slavs are made up of several tribes that wandered eastern and central Europe until the 5th century CE. Some scholars believe the Slavs are a mix of Baltic and Indo-European tribes who wandered across Europe's mountains and plains. However, the most viable thesis is that the Slavs were a collection of many tribes, who were mostly rooted in a common family of Baltic and Slavonic languages that shaped tribal and ethnic polarities and affinities. Groups that spoke a particular dialect chose to band together, while distancing themselves from groups that spoke different dialects. By the 7th century CE, the Slavs began emigrating to other regions and their population increased dramatically.

South Slavs

South Slavs are a mix of groups who migrated from areas south of the Baltic Sea. They are often equated with the Sclaveni and other tribes from the 5th century CE, who broke away from the larger group of tribes we now call Slavs. As the main group of Slavs launched a campaign against Byzantium, the South Slavs joined them reluctantly.

There were likely major historical tensions between the South Slavs and the main group of Slavs, perhaps even linguistic differences. It could have been that the main group of Slavs were more disposed to Baltic dialects, while the South Slavs were more disposed to Slavonic variations. Despite the combined effort of the two groups, the Byzantine defeated the Slavs and crumbled the alliance.

With diminished power, the Slavs' net worth of pillaged goods (230 Curta) suffered, causing a reduction in their economy and ability to sustain a growing population. Seeking to monopolize limited supplies and resources, the South Slavs again distanced themselves from the main group, both politically and geographically. This led to further linguistic disunity and fragmentation.

Reeling from the setback of defeat, the South Slavs began settlements in an area that spans the present-day border between Bulgaria and Romania known as *Dobruja*. They formed an early alliance with the Avar to accelerate economic recovery by joining the Avar in raids of Byzantine settlements in the region. However, as the Slav population grew through rapid migration, the South Slavs quickly turned against and betrayed their Avar allies (252 Fine), forming their first isolated ethno-centric community (253 Curta). The Avar proposed a counter-alliance with the Byzantine, who backed the Avar to begin campaigns against the South Slavs with a view to getting rid of them from Byzantium.

With increased threats from the Byzantine and renewed coercion from the Avar *Khanate* (realm), the South Slavs were forced to create regional alliances. However, to make the alliances work, and to sustain their ethno-centric character, the South Slavs reinforced the hierarchical structure of their society, placing military leaders at the top of the order.

Archeological digs show that a result of this restructuring was that South Slav settlements and disjointed hamlets grew into larger communities, that were tightly connected to each other. However, it also required a reconciliation among the elite from each community; not all could rule. The net result was that a handful of privileged groups emerged as a distinct ruling class (253 Curta) which introduced an early form of ***autocracy*** or autocratic leadership among the Slavs. It also placed military leaders in positions of political and civil leadership, bringing about early forms of Slavic ***oligarchy*** and ***militarism***.

Autocracy

As societies evolve out of anarchy to state, they undergo a process where individuals and groups of leaders with access to violent force form a dominant coalition (254 Tullock). *This coalition comes about due to prolonged violence that depletes available resources. With the net benefits of violence diminishing, members of the dominant coalition find incentive to cooperate and avoid fighting. This cooperation results in privilege that is shared among members, who effectively monopolize the use of violent force* (255 Douglass). *Such coalitions can be run by single rulers or by a council of rulers. The result is the centralization of power where the controlling authority monopolizes the extortion of wealth from the population under its control, influence or reach. This type of authority is known as an* ***autocracy****.*

Autocracy *invariably extorts or exploits wealth from local populations, leaving little for the masses to invest or use for their own production. Monopoly power allows the autocracy to bring about peaceful order in exchange for continued compliance. Early Slav and Serb societies were autocratic, and their autocratic tendencies persisted well after other groups in Western and Central Europe began the process of building controls and balances or outright moved away from autocratic policies and practices.*

Militarism

Militarism *is a practice of a government or rulers where the central authority, such as a state, maintains strong armed forces capabilities* (256 Oxford). *This practice glorifies military force and the ideals of a military class where the armed forces often dominate the administrative functions of the state* (257 Vagts).

In the Balkans and Eastern Europe, ***militarism*** *grew as a matter of survival against countless invasions from tribes who were contending or competing for wealth and power. The Balkans were attacked incessantly by tribes and armies that were either traveling through the region, or those that intended to conquer or occupy the region.*

Militarism *became accepted as a norm and later became engrained into autocratic society as that is how society protected itself against attack. Because* ***militarism*** *results in the state's ability to wage war, it can also be used to commit violence against groups that are not necessarily attacking or invading the state or any of its protected or claimed resources.*

Early Slav societies engrained militarism into their social, political, and administrative structures. Military commanders commonly sat among the autocracy, while loyal and decorated or glorified soldiers were given positions of leadership and authority in administration and civil government.

Oligarchy

Oligarchy *is a form of rule where a small group of elites have control or authority over a nation or tribe.*

Some old-school scholars suggest the Sclaveni or South Slavs were forerunners of Bosnians, Serbs and Croats (258 Donia, 259 Zlatarski), *primarily due to linguistic affinity—meaning they speak a similar language. Everyone generally believed that the Slavic language originated with the Slavs and assumed that the Slavs "must have" brought it to Bosnia and Hezegovina.*

However, genetic science shows that Bosnians and Herzegovinians are a much older group than the tribes of the South Slavs, and we know they had rich linguistic capabilities well before Baltic tribes ever came together as Slavs and South Slavs. Conventional thinking follows that the language of the original Bosnians and Herzegovinians must have been wiped out, either with the tribes that resided there, or by a wave of Slav influx. But genetic science shows this is not the case.

Genetic science identifies Bosnians and Herzegovinians as a genetic group that predates both Slavs and Sclaveni by several thousand years. However, we know from linguistics that the Bosnians and Herzegovinians and the main group of Slavs do have a common linguistic root that is not distant in Proto-Slavonic and a late descendant dialect of Proto-Baltic. So, it is natural that the two groups would have some degree of affinity. Linguistic constructs from Proto-Baltic developed parallel to Proto-Slavonic.

The descendants of the Proto-Baltic speakers shared their language with tribes that they assimilated. The Proto-Slavonic speakers, who separated from the others, developed constructs of their own and shared those with tribes they assimilated. All these groups had affinity to some degree because their dialects originated from the same root. That is why there are similarities between their languages.

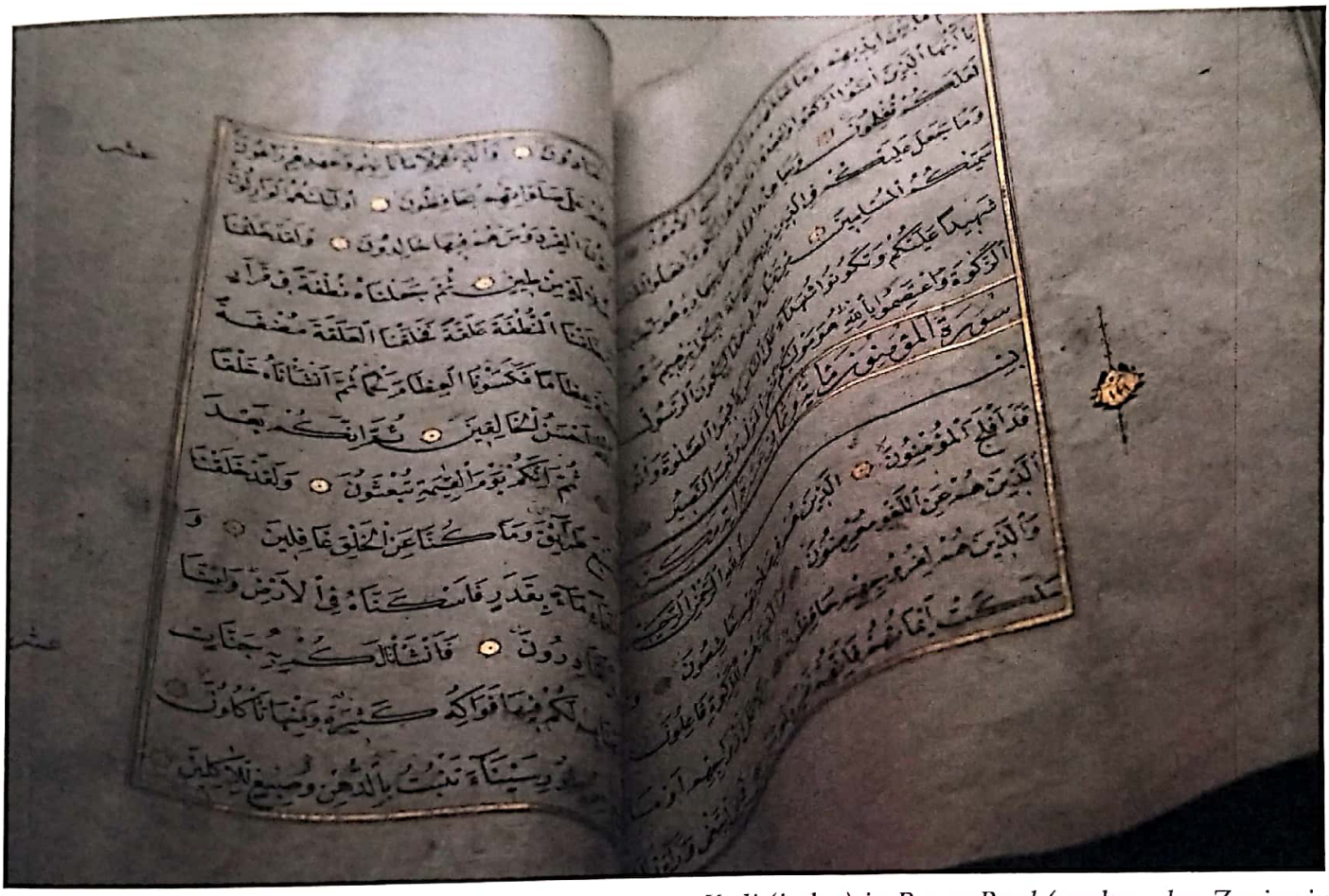
Among the descendants of Proto-Baltic speakers were the Sclaveni. The Sclaveni were probably one of many Baltic tribes who broke off from the main Baltic group. They travelled with at least two other Baltic tribes and all three made their way to the Balkans. Other Baltic groups remained in more eastern and norther parts of Europe. The Slavs and South Slavs came together in the 5th century, and not before that.

By 518 CE, Sclaveni refugees quickly assimilated and adopted the dialect that was spoken in Bosnia-Herzegovina, especially since it was so close to their own dialect. The Sclaveni took the language of the Bosnians back with them to Getica and Moesia (northern Bulgaria and northeastern Serbia). As Sclaveni women were captured by the Avar, the language the women had acquired in Bosnia and Herzegovina, spread through the otherwise illiterate Avar population. Sclaveni mothers taught the language to their offspring with their Avar captors.

There were two separate growth patterns within Bosnia-Herzegovina that differentiated the natives from the Sclaveni. Genetics of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian natives' haplogroup show insignificant Sclaveni and Avar DNA (260 Peričić). *The Sclaveni settled only after their raids of Byzantium halted. In contrast, Bosnians settled centuries earlier, indicating they are not descendants of Sclaveni or South Slavs.*

The Sclaveni mixed with other tribes as the genesis of the South Slavs. The Sclaveni are the ancestors of South Slavs and not the ancestors of Bosnians and Herzegovinians; although, there is some intermixing between Sclaveni and Bosnia and Herzegovina's natives, which explains some common genetic markers between the two.

The Dawn of Islam



The Qur'an of Muhamed Bošnjak, who was a temporary Kadi (judge) in Bosna Brod (modern-day Zenica in central Bosnia), as well as trustee and donor to the Gazi Husrev Beg endowment in 1732 CE. The Qur'an is housed at the Gazi Husrev Beg Library in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Photo © 2018 Irfan Mirza.

In 610 CE, in the city of Mecca (present-day Saudi Arabia), Muhammad ibn Abdullah or just Muhammad, a well-respected tradesman in the region, began teaching a strict form of *monotheism* known as Islam (261 Nu'mani). Muhammad's teachings came out of revelations that began in a cave known as *Hira* near the town of Mecca, where Muhammad often retreated for meditation. Islamic tradition and verses recited by Muhammad describe the arrival of the archangel Gabriel in the cave, who revealed God's words (261 Nu'mani). In Islam, God is known as *Allah*, a supreme power who is simultaneously almighty, merciful, beneficient, and unique beyond comparison to all others.

Over the course of Muhammad's lifetime, the divine revelations continued and helped form the doctrine and creed of the Islamic faith. In a compiled form, the revelations constitute the Qur'an, the holy book and central religious text of Islam (262 Nasr). Muhammad became known as the prophet of Islam, and the last in a long lineage of prophets that predated Islam to the beginning of mankind.

Islam built on foundational principles that were taught by earlier prophets such as Adam, known in the Bible and Qur'an as the first man (263 Hendel), followed by subsequent patriarchs such as Noah (from the Bible's book of Genesis and the verses of the chapter titled "Nuh" ("Noah") in the Qur'an) (264 Wells), Ibrahim (Abraham the Patriarch of the Jewish people) (265 Levenson, Quran 87:19) from the Bronze Age, and Musa (Moses the prophet who led Jews out of slavery a millennium after Abraham) (266 Keeler), Isa (Jesus in Christianity some 1300 years after Moses) (267 McDowell), and Jesus' apostles (268 Wheeler) culminating in the seal of the prophets, Muhammad (269 Esposito).

Muhammad's deeds, sayings and teachings became known as the *Sunnah*, the body of tradition, and social and legal customs, that became central to the understanding and practice of the Islamic faith (270 Afsaruddin).

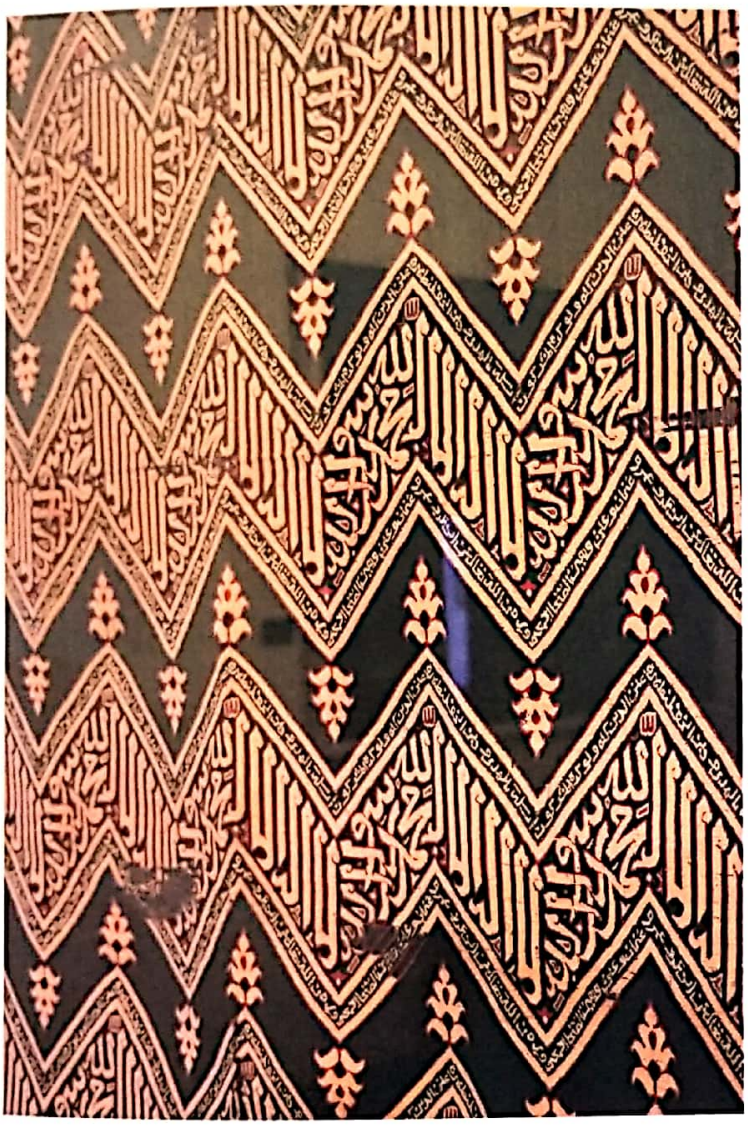
The *Sunnah* is based on the verbally transmitted teachings, sayings, practices and behavior of the Islamic prophet, as recorded by his companions and scribes.

Much as Jesus' oral traditions reached a broader region of his apostles' travels and influence, Muhammad's traditions and the words of the Qur'an, reached masses and gained early converts to the faith in the Arabian Peninsula. Muhamad's personal characteristics, such as trustworthiness, honesty, wisdom, genuine concern for the community, and political savvy, played a critical role in spreading the message of Islam, even though that message differed from established pagan rituals and beliefs in the region. **Islam's emphasis on the oneness or unity of Allah, the unwavering belief in the Qur'an, and the undoubted leadership of Muhammad as Allah's final prophet, became core tenets of the creed.** However, as that creed was forming, Muhammad did not discard the core *monotheistic* tenets of Islam's predecessor faiths, Christianity and Judaism—namely, that Muslims needed to believe in those tenets and worship the same God, Allah *(Quran 29:46)*.

The Islamic creed requires belief in Allah, His Angels, His Books of revelation (including prior books), His prophets or messengers (including previous prophets), the day of Judgement (and with it, life after death), and the notion of Divine preordainment (also known as predestination or destiny) (271 Taqi al-Modarresi).

Based on the Qur'an's foundational edicts to humanity, Muhammad worked diligently to entitle his community with rights to: justice and equality *(Qur'an 2:62, 5:8, 5:69, 17:70, 49:13)*, freedom of belief and speech *(Qur'an 2:256, 28:56, 60:8)*, prosperity and mutual responsibility *(Qur'an 2:188, 59:19, 5:48)*, security and welfare *(Qur'an 59:22-25, 2:205, 49:11-12)*, and self-governance and dignity *(Qur'an 3:159, Sura al-Shura [42:1-53], 88:21-22)*. **The fundamental rights of self-governance, mutual responsibility and equality became the basis of modern democracy** (272 Roots, 273 Green, 274 Sachedina, 275 Shavit).

With Muhammad's death in 632 CE, his close companion and father-in-law, Abu Bakr, was elected as the first *Caliph*, or successor to the prophet to lead the community (276 Kadi). The community is known as the *Ummah* (277 Houtsma), and the followers are known as *Muslims* (278 Sultan).



Cover from the grave of Prophet Muhammad. This cloth covered the prophet's grave from 1517-1600 CE. Artifact donated by Sultan Abdul Aziz to the people of Bosnia and Herzegoving in 1867 CE; currently on display at the Gazi Husrev Beg Library complex, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Photo © 2918 Irfan Mirza.

Even with the consensus of Muhammad's companions and tribal leaders, Abu Bakr's election was not unopposed. Some followers were determined to see Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law, Ali ibn Abi Talib, ascend as Caliph. They felt that Muhammad's relation to Ali entitled him to succeed the prophet. However, Muhammad had not established dynastic succession as a model for his community. As a result, the followers splintered off. They became known as *Shi'a*, which means "followers." **The followers of the *Rashidum Caliphate* became known as *Sunni*, which means "followers of tradition."** The word *Shi'a* later became closely associated with a religious and political movement that spanned parts of North Africa, Syria and Persia.

Abu Bakr led the tribes for two years and was succeeded by Muhammad's other companions: Umar ibn al-Khattab, Uthman ibn Affan, and Ali ibn Abi Talib (279 Madelung). Even though Ali eventually ascended to the Caliphate, the *Shi'a* remained splintered from the *Sunni*. The four Caliphs, known as *al-Khulafa 'ur-Rashidun*, or the *Rashidun* (Righteous), kept the *Ummah* from being overrun by the warring Byzantine and Sassanid empires. The conflict between the Byzantine and Sassanids bore heavily on the Arabian Penninsula, inflicting damage to property and the economy, and their campaign resulted in injured or killed local Christians and Muslims (280 Greatrex).

Centuries later, historians would note that from the simple declaration of the Islamic creed, **the prophet Muhammad inspired generations of evangelists who would eventually reach Bosnia and Herzegovina and inspire the European nation's monotheists and pagans to embrace Islam.**

EXPANSION OF THE CALIPHATE

The reach of the ***Rashidun Caliphate*** extended beyond the Arabian Peninsula into the Levant, the Transcaucasus region in the north, an area in North Africa that spanned from Egypt to Tunisia, parts of Iran, parts of Central Asia and Southeast Asia (281 Zarrinkub). The successive gains in converts to Islam lasted a quarter of a century until the Caliphate split because of a civil war between factions who supported the reigning Caliph, Ali, and those who had previously supported the assassinated Caliph, Uthman (282 Rahman). The internal strife lasted five years and paved the path in 661 CE for the rise of the ***Umayyad Caliphate***.

The *Umayyad* clan originated from Mecca and continued the expansion of the Caliphate into the Caucusus, Transoxiana, the Indian subcontinent, westward in Africa and north from there into the Iberian Peninsula (283 Britannica). The Umayyads catalyzed the rapid and far-reaching expansion of Islam, which included conversions by Persians, Berbers, Copts and Aramaics (284 Previté-Orton).

By the 8th century CE, Muslim traders and explorers had journeyed north to the Volga River and west of that along the Adriatic Sea. Some wrote about their travels and described European groups such as the *Saqaliba* (Sclaveni), a group of tribes that lived as far east as Primary-Rus and tribes who lived west towards the Adriatic (285 al-Eidi), a region that includes Bosnia and Herzegovina.

A group called *as-Slawiya*, which is Arabic for Slav, was also chronicled. Interactions with fair-haired, light-skinned, blue-eyed indigenous people were mentioned in Arab and Byzantine chronicles (285 al-Eidi). The Byzantine Chronicles of Theophanes the Confessor, from the early 9th century CE, mention that the Umayyad caliph Muawiyah I settled an army of 5,000 "Slavic" mercenaries in Syria in 660 CE (286 Mango).

By 750 CE, the *Umayyad Caliphate* was overthrown by a movement led by the ***Abbasid*** family, who were from the clan of Abu Hashim, a grandson of Ali. The *Abbasids* attracted zealot supporters of various failed operations and revolts (287 Arjomand) against the Umayyads. The diverse group rallied groups of non-Arab Muslims in favor of a Caliphate that would take on a multi-ethnic character, potentially shifting the spotlight onto non-Arab power centers.

The *Abbasids* had come to power over the *Umayyads* with the support of the *Shi'a*; however, once they gained power, Abbasid leaders restated their exclusive *Sunni* beliefs, abandoning the *Shi'a* and unintentionally underpinning a schism or exclusionary divide between *Sunnis* and their *Shi'a* compatriots (288 Fattah). Nonetheless, despite the theological alienation of the *Shi'a*, the Abbasids were inclusive of non-Arab Muslims, Christians and Jews, and drove Islamic outreach eastward (288 Fattah).

Folio from Tarikhnama (Book of History) by Persian historian Abu Ali Muhammad Bal'ami from the early 14th century CE depicting Abu'l Abbas as-Saffah as he is proclaimed the first Abbasid Caliph in 754 CE.

Early in the five-century reign of the *Abbasids*, the pressures of the expanding Caliphate into Byzantine territory opened corridors, allowing both Christian and Muslim evangelical monotheists to travel to the outskirts of the Caliphate and the hinterlands of the Byzantine Empire. Their travels spanned across the Balkans and northern regions between Europe and Asia (289 Hoiberg). The influence of the Abbasid evangelists in central and eastern Europe persisted, and over the years, it impacted the masses such as the Volga Tatars and Volga Bulgars, who converted to Islam.

Within Bosnia and Herzegovina, the influence of the Bulgars would not be known for several centuries. However, by 841 CE, Arab sailors had already made their way up to Istrija along the north Adriatic Sea (290 Grierson), and some had even travelled up the Neretva River in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 867 CE, Arab naval forces, known as *Aghlabids*, besieged Ragusa in the southern part of the Adriatic for fifteen months (291 Metcalfe). Given the well-documented raids in Istrija and Ragusa, it is reasonable to accept that the Arabs had also tested the waterways into Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In the early 10th century CE, an Arab Muslim scholar named Ahmed Ibn Fadlan travelled to Volga Bulgaria as a representative of the Embassy of the *Abbasid Caliphate* (292 Gabriel). He chronicled his travels in a journal known as *Risala*, where he mentioned *Saqaliba* and *Rus* tribes in the eastern stretches of Europe. He explained that the *Saqaliba* had a propensity to wage war (293 Hermes).

In cases where they lost battles, the *Saqaliba* would be captured and later sold as slaves. The *Saqaliba* were the eastern Slavs; the *Rus* were likely early Scandinavians, such as West Finns, who were also known as *Ruotsi* (294 Brink). These early engagements brought Islamic ideology and monotheism to northern tribes who would eventually migrate to the Balkans, with some monotheistic tribes settling in Bosnia and Herzegovina centuries later.

From the 10th century CE, *Abbasid* rule began to shrink in geographic territory to an area confined to the region around Baghdad, modern-day Iraq, as Turkic leaders in the hinterland stopped paying the Caliphate (295 Bowen). At roughly the same time, a hybrid medieval group, best described as Turkic and Persian and belonging to the Oghuz Turk tribes, came to power in a region that stretched from Anatolia, through the Levant, Central Asia, the Persian Gulf, all the way to the Hindu Kush mountains. This power became known as the ***Seljuk Empire*** (296 Savory). The Seljuks took military control of the Abbasid Caliphate.

By the late 11th century CE, the *Seljuks* came under attack of the *First Crusade*, a wave of attacks initiated by Pope Urban II at the Council of Clermont, to conquer Jerusalem (297 Asbridge). During the Crusade, the Pope's Council invoked a siege strategy to regain Nicea and Antioch and establish a new Christian Kingdom of Jerusalem (298 Harris).

With the pressures of Byzantium and a growing Christian threat, within a century, the Seljuks became fractured due to infighting among themselves and competing dynasties in other areas of the Caliphate. To retain sovereignty, the *Seljuks* increasingly relied on Turkic ***Oghuz*** clans in border areas to ensure civil safety against incursions by the Byzantine. The clans were led by *Beys*, or Lords.

By the 13th century CE, Mongol invasions from the east deteriorated the power of the Seljuks to the point that Mongol commanders began asserting authority over Anatolia beyond the control of the Seljuks. This apparent weakness was perceived as a betrayal to the state by the Oghuz *Beys*, who independently declared sovereignty. As the Mongols invaded Byzantium, the fleeing Muslim, Persian and Turk warriors joined breakaway noble family governors of the *Seljuks*, known as *Atabegs*. Collectively, the *Atabegs* and *Beys* formed *Emirates*, kingdoms under a prince or commander (299 Peacock).

The Mongol invasion of Anatolia in the 1260's CE, forced the *Anatolian Emirates* to reinforce their patchwork statelets known as *Beyliks*, or small principalities governed by *Beys*. Among the *Beyliks*, the principality of *Bithynia* controlled by Bey Osman (Othman) Gazi I unified Muslim and non-Muslim Turks and Byzantine insurgents to extend the control of his principality along the Sakarya River. Osman's fervor for justice and focus on economic growth of his principality preceded his warriors as they marched into neighboring *Beyliks* that quickly came under Osman's authority. Osman's son, Orhan spearheaded the expansion of his father's *Beylik*, and within the first century after Osman's death, Edirne (Adrianpole) was conquered in 1362 CE by Osman's grandson, Murad I Hüdavendigâr (300 Imber), who became head of the last Islamic Caliphate, known as the Osman or ***Ottoman Caliphate***. The ***Ottomans*** expanded the Caliphate's influence to cover Anatolia, much of the Middle East, North Africa, the Caucasus region, and parts of Eastern Europe (301 Lambton). From 1364 CE to 1463 CE, the *Ottomans* gained power in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and ruled until their decline in 1878 CE. In 1923, the Caliphate was disbanded as the **Republic of Turkey** was formed.

BULGAR MIGRATION

The Bulgars were semi-nomadic tribes that emerged as a power from the Pontic-Caspian steppe and the Volga River regions during the 7th century CE. They had equestrian capabilities, which allowed them to cover vast territory from their roots in Central Asia. The Bulgars absorbed many groups from the Huns (also known as Hunnic tribes) (302 Kim), as well as from the Sassanid and various nomadic groups, alongside other Indo-European tribes (303 Brook).

By the year 668 CE, the Turkic Khazar *Khaganate* (or Empire) had absorbed parts of the Bulgar stronghold. A decade later the *Khaganate* conquered a region along the Danube, the Black Sea, and parts of modern-day Romania and Bulgaria, extending the Bulgar empire to Moesia (Serbia and parts of Bulgaria), opening the Balkans to Bulgar migration.

The Bulgars merged with Thracians and some Vlachs (304 Waldman, 305 Golden). Genetic studies show many of them intermixed with some West Slavs (306 Karachanak) as well, resulting in a larger group that emerged with diverse capabilities, such as advanced military and survival tactics.

Scholars suggest the language of the early Bulgars began as Ruthenian or Turkic (307 Sedlar), and later changed to a Slavonic dialect (308 Curta) that was influenced by Bosnian Slavonic. However, this is not well documented, so it continues to be debated as speculation. The religion of the Bulgars, before the arrival of Christianity or Islam, began as pagan and was focused on a single, powerful god. Following that, zealous *Monophysite* Ghassanids and their followers brought monotheistic ideas to the Bulgars, transforming them to stricter forms of ***monotheism*** (309 Sedlar, 310 Petkov) and ***Monophysitism.***

A core tenet of *Monophysitism* is the belief in a single, all-powerful God. This tenet took hold early among Bulgars who converted from paganism, and those who migrated out of the Bulgar ancestral homeland in the Volga River region, known commonly as *Volga Bulgaria.* It is likely that tradesmen and scouts from the Volga Bulgars arrived in Bosnia and Herzegovina and began sharing their spiritual beliefs before the mass migration of Bulgars. We know that Bulgar scouts reached modern-day Macedonia at about the same time. So, it is only logical to conclude that, at a minimum, at least some of them traveled through Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Within Bosnia and Herzegovina, the ideas brought by the Bulgars resonated with the principles associated with a single deity, which encouraged more Bulgars to evangelize across the territory. **With the introduction of Bulgar *monotheism*, Bosnia and Herzegovina saw a shift from a supreme female deity to one that is male. This shift was a reinforcement of the male-dominated mythology that the Ilyr had brought to the region generations earlier.**

Bulgar Sects

14th century miniature from the Chronicle of Constantine Manasses depicts the Bulgar Khan Kurum pursuing emperor Michael I Rangabe of the Byzantine in the battle of Versinikia in 813 CE. Even though the Bulgars were outnumbered two-to-one, they defeated the Byzantine army and positioned themselves to enter Constantinople. However, during the siege of Constantinople, Khan Kurum died unexpectedly, giving advantage back to the Byzantine.

From the onset of the Bulgar migration, religious sects began forming in regions controlled by the Bulgars. Bulgars from the ancestral homeland in the Volga River region, began as mostly pagans (311 Golden), but as they crossed the Danube, towards modern-day Macedonia, subtle changes were taking place among their religious leaders and elite (312 MacDermott). These leaders came under the influence of Christians (313 Bury). Meanwhile the Volga Bulgars remained pagan but were later introduced to Islam by Arabs, Iranians and Turks (314 Bukharaev).

During the great battle against the Byzantine, the Bulgars plundered religious sites and razed Byzantine strongholds between Thrace and Adrianople (in Turkey). They enslaved 10,000 Byzantine from Adrianople, and captured another 50,000 from Thrace, displacing them to Danube Bulgaria. After laying siege on Constantinople in 814 CE, the Bulgars were set back when their leader, Khan Kurum died. His untimely and unexpected death deterred the Bulgar army from marching into Constantinople (315 Treadgold). Additionally, the Bulgars had to deal with their Byzantine captives. **Among the Byzantine captured by the Bulgars were *Monophysite* Christians, who were resettled in Bulgaria, where they began an evangelical mission that eventually made its way to Bosnia and Herzegovina** (316 Brockett).

Bosnia's Bogomili

Bogomil tombstones and markers known as Stećci (plural of Stećak) in Bosnia and Herzegovina are closely associated with Bulgars who migrated to the region. Drawing by Austrian painter Hugo Charlemont (1850-1939) dating to approx. 1901; title: Bogomilenstein von Donja Zgošća.

By the early 10th century CE, a Bulgarian sect, called Bogomili (the Bogomils), came to prominence under the leadership of an ascetic Christian priest named Bogomil, during the reign of Tsar (Czar) Peter I (317 Peters) of Bulgaria. Bogomil adhered to the early spiritual teachings of Jesus, and strictly followed the teachings of the Apostles and their emissaries. Because of this strict adherence to early Christian doctrine, Bogomil rejected the ecclesiastical hierarchy and authority of emerging and later Christian churches (317 Peters, 318 Crampton). **A consequence of Bogomil's adherence to Jesus' oral traditions and rejction of foreign authority was that he and his church were deemed heretical.**

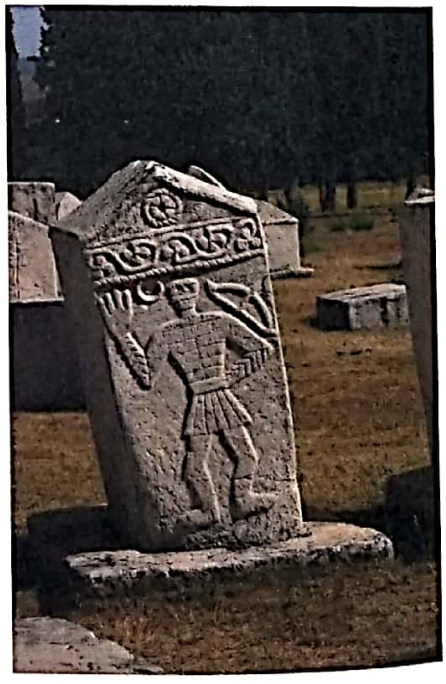
Many scholars place the origins of the Bogomils in Macedonia, where they argue that Bogomil founded a neo-Gnostic or Christian dualist sect. They suggest that Bogomil was responding to the feudal stratification in Bulgarian society (317 Peters, 318 Crampton).

Stećak markers are monolithic tombstones that can be found across Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as border areas in Croatia, Montenegro, and Serbia.

There are more than 70,000 stećci (pronounced stech-tsi) in the region, about 60,000 are within the current borders of modern-day Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Most historians estimate the stećci to date to the 12th century CE, although some argue that many obelisks date well before that.

The ancient residents of Bosnia and Herzegovina began work on the stećci to tell the stories of the lives of those who were entombed under them. Howevver, these are not ordinary tombstones for people who died. The tombstones are meticuluously engraved with decorative motifs that highlight symbols and characteristics of medieval art. Many stećci have religious and secular symbols, and ornate designs that showcase artistic expression and tell the stories of the victims and their society for generations of descendants of these ancient people.



The word stećak comes from the Bosnian word stajati or stojeći which mean to stand, as the obelisks "stand" over a fraction of all the graves. Since most markers lie horizontally, some scholars refer to them as kamik (319 Lovrenović). The wordform of stećak is inconsistent with the semantic forms of the Bosnian language (320 Buturović). This fact places the word well before the adoption of current semantic principles and could very well place the word in the Bosnian languge before medieval times.

The stećci reveal inscriptions in Bosančica, the Bosnian Glagolitic script, as well as Bosnian Cyrillic and Bosnian Latin scripts. In general, engravings on stećci tell of gallant feats and heroic sacrifices. Some stećci have a common theme with people raising a hand in a gesture of fealty or loyalty. Some scholars suggest the fealty was to the monarchs of Bosnia and Herzegovina (319 Lovrenović). However, the raised hand more likely demonstrates fealty to their faith, which resulted in their execution.

The continuation of Bogomil teachings in Bosnia and Herzegovina was a source of contention between the church in Rome and the Christian church of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The inscriptions on many stećci tell of loyalty to God and faith, while others describe betrayal by a foreign church and unjust death or execution. When examined in aggregate, the stećci remain permanent markers of the loyalty that Bosnians had to their kingdom and their faith, which was spread widely by the Bogomil. Photos © 2017 Irfan Mirza.

Regardless of where Bogomil founded his church, it reached Bosnia and Herzegovina and took hold there as a messge of the original Christians, delivered in the form of Jesus' oral tradition without the accoutrements of the Chalcedon council. Bogomil's followers became known as Bogomil (Bogomils). When Chalcedonian churches reached parts of Bulgaria, they engaged in a campaign to destroy Bogomil doctrine, which they saw as heresy. Bogomil books and church documents were burned, and leaders persecuted and punished. Strong historical evidence remains pointing to the fierce campaigns mounted by Christian churches and officials, especially against the sect in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Known as a stečak, this tomb at Sarajevo's Zemaljski Muzej/National Museum is representative of tombs that mark graves of Bosnia and Herzegovina's earliest pious Christians. Necropolises of stečak are most frequently found in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Photo © 2017 Irfan Mirza.

Bogomils were ascetics, puritans who abstained from material wealth and who denounced gains from it. This notion challenged the growth of powerful feudal lords and even the power of foreign Christian churches.

While Bogomils in Danube Bulgaria and Macedonia were persecuted, in Volga Bulgaria, Islam was being adopted by the masses and was becoming the official state religion (314 Bukharaev, 321 Mako). **Bulgar trading caravans began transferring Islamic ideology of *monotheism* to places such as Bosnia and Herzegovina.** Within Bosnia, ancient cultures and religious practices that were previously focused on fertility and the mother goddess, found enlightenment in *monotheistic* teachings.

When Bogomil and his followers were persecuted in Danube Bulgaria and Macedonia by Chalcedonian Christians, they sought refuge in neighboring regions. **While most of south central Europe had begun following one of the Chalcedonian churches, Bosnia and Herzegovina stood with no religious prejudice against the Bogomil. Consequently, large numbers of Bogomils, including Bogomil the priest, emigrated to Bosnia and Herzegovina.** In Bosnia, Bogomil found affinity with the natives' ideas of *monotheism*, making it relatively easier to spread his message. **Out of sight of newly empowered Chalcedonian churches, Bogomil started gaining converts to *Monophysite* Christianity in Bosnia and Herzegovina, setting the stage for future confrontation and the onslaught of Crusades against Bosnia and Herzegovina's isolated followers of Jesus.**

THE BOSNIAN LANGUAGE

The Bosnian language played a central role in the spread of religious and cultural ideas in the Balkans. As one of the root languages of European natives, the earliest form of the Bosnian language began 25,000 years ago as an Indo-European proto-language.

Its development is rooted in a conceptual hybrid dialect that can best be described as Balto-Slavonic (322 Gimbutas). That ancestral dialect split into proto Baltic and Slavonic branches. Proto-Slavonic branched into Southern Slavonic, out of which came a Bosnian Slavonic dialect, the language spoken in the early settlements of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Baltic continued as a close facsimile of Slavonic, but with distance and time between the two groups, each language evolved independently.

The Bosnian Slavonic language was picked up by Slav refugees who escaped from the Byzantine (323 Fine)**, and other races such as the Avar** (324 Bennett). The refugees were motivated to learn the local language in Bosnia and Herzegovina, so they could blend in and not be discovered by their enemies. Similarly, they also absorbed the culture and traditions of Bosnians and Herzegovinians. Some Avar tribes migrated to Bosnia and Herzegovina (325 Gimbutas) and absorbed the local dialect. When the Slavs returned to their former homes (326 Zickel), or when the Avar left to extend their empire, each of them carried the Bosnian Slavonic language out with them. Up to that point, the Slavs spoke many dialects, including a variation of Baltic, and the Avar spoke a form of Turkic or a dialect that scholars define as proto-Avar.

Across the region, the Slavs were attacked by Avar warriors, who captured Slav women. Genetic analysis of Avar gravesites revealed Slav maternal DNA, indicating that Slav women bore Avar-Slav children (327 Malyarchuk). **The women taught the language they had previously acquired as refugees** (238 Curta) **in Bosnia and Herzegovina, to their offspring.** As generations of Avar plundered the region and stretched their *Khaganate* or empire, they spread the language.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, a *toponym* exists that is likely an Avar settlement. A *toponym* is a name of a place that is derived from a topographical or geographical feature. The site, known as Obre, near the town of Kakanj, is an archeological find that dates to the Neolithic period. Obre is a name used by the Avar for a few settlements in the Avar homeland (328, 329 Britannica). Therefore, it is likely that the Avar had a permanent presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina, probably well after the Neolithic period. The Avar were illiterate as they did not have a written script. To date, no written material has been found among Avar archeological finds. **As the Avar came to Bosnia and Herzegovina, they learned the Bosnian Slavonic language and carried it out, spreading it throughout their realm.**

Confusion about the Bosnian language stems from the fact that South Slavs gained dominance across Eastern Europe in a very short period. As they came into power, the South Slavs didn't have among them many scholars or an objective view of how they became dominant. Consequently, later historians understated the role of the hosts in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and how Bosnian Slavonic became the language of the South Slavs. This language was close enough to the languages of the rest of the Slavs that similarities persisted (330 Kempgen) despite centuries of independent development. The Slavs didn't record how the Avar chased them to their destiny. Instead, the South Slavs formed a collective narrative that credited the origins of their language to the church (331, 332 Lunt) and the Slav people. Bosnia and Herzegovina, as the epicenter of the language, was erased from the narrative.

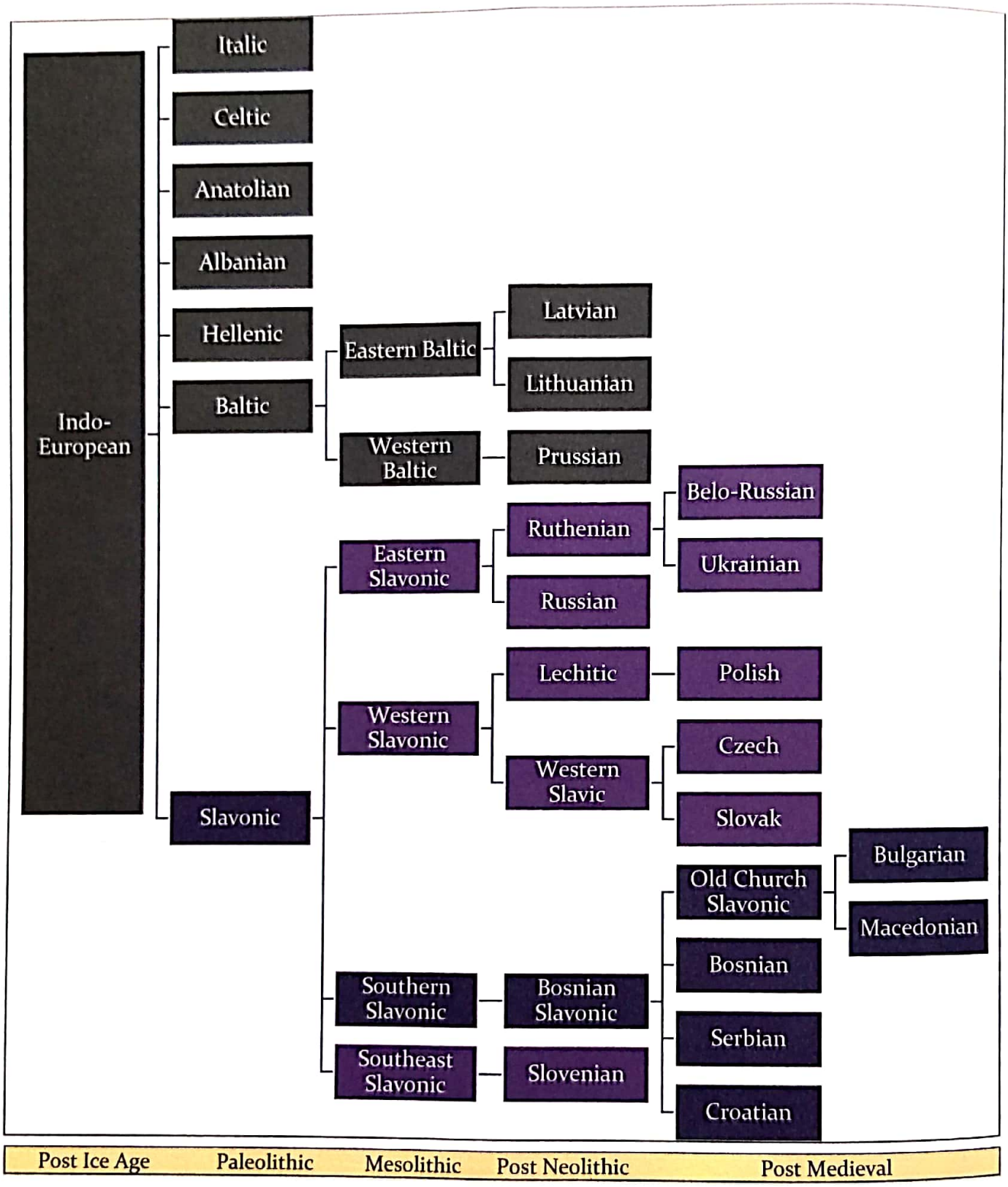
Slavic and Slavonic

Linguists call the Balto-Slavonic language "Balto-Slavic." This is an inaccuracy in that the Slavs weren't identified as a group until the 5th century. Therefore, language that predates the Slavs cannot and should not be called Slavic. This failure in logic was suppressed due to the heavy political forces that have shut down any discourse on diverse origins of modern-day Slavic speakers.

However, genetic science and archeology have begun to demonstrate, without doubt, that groups speaking a contemporary language, or variations of it, don't have to be of the same origin. Indeed, in the case of current Slavic speakers, Bosnians and Herzegovinians have a distinct genetic origin, that is different than many of their neighbors, even though they speak highly similar and easily intelligible dialects with identical roots. The root of these languages can be best described as Bosnian Slavonic (333 Vais) or Southern Bosnian Slavonic.

Language Hierarchy

Language hierarchy (on the right) depicting the development of Bosnian dialects in relation to some common European languages. Direction of influence is left to right. This chart corrects some long-standing misperceptions about Slavonic and Slavic languages, and particularly the origins of the Southern Bosnian Slavonic family of languages. Once the Southern Bosnian Slavonic dialect was established, it was absorbed by the Old Slavonic Church, which then influenced Bulgarian and Macedonian. During this period, the Slavs entrenched an indelible footprint on the region and became dominant cultural and economic forces. The church of the Slavs consisted of and embraced other dialects, including Bosnian Slavonic. The net effect of the Slavic influence and the church's dominance caused Slavonic to be labelled as Slavic, and resulted in modern forms of Serbian, Croatian and Bosnian. In the recent era, these dialects have comingled to the point that they are mutually intelligible. In the chart, dark purple shaded languages settled in Bosnia and Herzegovina first. All the purple shades, including light purple, are classified as Slavic languages.



Hierarchical representation of Indo-European proto languages and their relation to modern languages. The flow from left to right indicates an evolutionary path that began (left), before the Paleolithic era, with a set of Indo-European proto languages, culminating at the right in modern Bosnian, Serbian, Croatian, Bulgarian, Macedonian and Slovenian during the contemporary era.

SRBOJ

Map showing the journey of the South Slav group that became known as Srboj.

During the 4th century CE, a region east of the Vistula River, known as Sarmatia, served as a rest stop for large and diverse populations that were on the move across Europe. Sarmatia is a wide region that ranges from the Vistula River to the Danube, eastward to the Volga, bordering in the south at the Caucasus mountains between the Black and Caspian seas. The populations that tried to settle in Sarmatia, were pressured relentlessly by the Huns, who forced them them to flee. A small number of groups stayed in the region and formed alliances with other groups to ensure they had collective ability to defend against the Huns.

Other groups that migrated from the Baltic region formed alliances but were not strong enough to defend against the relentless attacks. So, they moved into Byzantium. **These groups became known as Sclaveni or Slavonic people, Slavs for short, even though they spoke a dialect in the Proto-Baltic lineage. Their *linguistic affinity* and common cause helped them stay together.**

Between the 6th and 7th centuries CE, the Byzantine attacked and enslaved people (334 Fine) who they perceived as being outsiders within their colonies. As a result, many Slav émigrés, who took up residence in Byzantine territory, were captured as slaves. Those who were not captured, escaped and sought refuge outside the colonies (335 Fine).

Migration of the Serbs (Сеоба-Срба-Seoba Srba), by Paja Jovanović. A painting of Serbian Patriarch Arsenije Čarnojević leading a community of South Slavs from Peć to Vojvodina in 1690. Image: Paja Jovanović, original in muzej grada Beograda.

Many of these refugees found sanctuary in the forests and hills of Zahumlije (pronounced *Zahumli-ye*), and other parts of modern-day Herzegovina and Dalmatia. By the late 6th century CE, the Slavic wave in the region rapidly swelled. As the Slavs swarmed the region, they formed raiding parties that crossed the Danube (334 Fine) on hit and run incursions in Byzantine territory, absconding goods. By the middle of the 7th century CE, a subgroup of Slavs settled along key military corridors of the Byzantine empire (336 Živković). These groups became known as South Slavs, meaning Slavs who traveled to or settled in southern regions of the territory roamed by the broader group of Slavs.

The destination of these early South Slavs included lands where many other populations had already settled (337 Pleterski). These indigenous or predecessor groups included Ilyr, Thracian, Dacian, Pannonian, Paeonians, Goth, Gepid, and Hellenic people. When the South Slavs settled among these groups, they mixed and added to the region's diversity. In places where the South Slavs were more powerful, they absorbed the local population, resulting in their offspring emerging with a new, obsessive Slav-dominant identity. In other places, their offspring acquired the local non-Slav identity.

During this period, these regions were attacked relentlessly by the Avar, a warring faction that had superior military capability due to their mastery of warfare from horseback. The Avar inflicted significant damage on local villages and populations. As new or unsettled immigrants, the Slavs and South Slavs were among the more vulnerable groups being attacked. A consequence of this vulnerability was that the South Slavs retreated while the local non-Slavs actively defended their territory, people and posessions. The self-preserving behavior of the South Slavs, and their geographic dispersion, earned them a moniker as "scattered people" or *Srboj* in the local dialect.

Procopius, an Eastern Roman (Byzantine) scholar from the 6th century CE, identified a group of Sclaveni and Antes who "spoke the same language" but were not of the same origin as the Venethi. He called these people "*Sporoi*" (338 Barford). Later scholars demonstrated that the word *Sporoi* was a corruption of the original word "*Srboj*" (339 Bury). Both variations of the word are defined to mean a "scattered people" (340 Poppe). The modern-day word Serb is derived from the moniker *Srboj*. The ethnonym Slav forms the basis of the modern English word "slave" which comes from the Latin word "*sclavus*" (341 Brittanica).

The writings of *Procopius* and other researchers from that era place the Serbs, Slavs and South Slavs as late arrivals to the region. **When compared to Bosnians and Herzegovinians living in the region thousands of years earlier, the finding disproves the claim that Bosnians and Herzegovinians are descendants or variants of Serbs or Slavs.**

Over the centuries, the various groups of East and South Slavs emerged without a unified identity, and as disparate people who had developed under different influences than the West Slavs. The West Slavs and Slovenes, alongside coastal tribes in Croatia, integrated into the common European philosophy and political, economic and social developments. However, the East and South Slavs were influenced by repeated Mongol invasions as well as attacks by other races that were later characterized as "barbarian." The East and South Slavs remained relatively isolated from their West Slav and other European counterparts. In isolation and distant from the learnings of more advanced cultures, East and South Slavs evolved bureaucratic *autocracies* to be able to govern themselves. To fend off relentless attacks, they developed heightened forms of *militarism* and developed cultural glorification of militarism. With indiscriminate warfare being the rule rather than the exception at that time, tales and accounts of violence began to be celebrated; perpetrators of violence glorified.

Scholars demonstrate that this retarded the development of a *middle class* (341 Brittanica) and prolonged the domination of the military elite and suppression of the immediately lower-strata socio-economic classes. While the rights of individuals and empathic humanism began across Western Europe, the East and South Slavs continued the darker polity of state supremacy (341 Brittanica) over subjects and individual rights, delaying the development of an urban middle class.

Serb Tribes

The idea of Serbs has been propagated over the years as a single or dominant race that conquered the Balkans. It includes the notion that the Serb "race" extends beyond Serbia into Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. Because of this perhaps unintentional bias, genetic results from Bosnia and Herzegovina, and to a lesser extent, from Croatia, are commonly used to explain the genetic or "racial" makeup of Serbs. However, if the region is dissected and the genetic indicators from Bosnia and Herzegovina are excluded, then the makeup of Serbs gives a more accurate view into the origins of the Serbian people, not as a race, but as a group of tribes.

For as long as Bosnian and Herzegovinian genetic data is included, the Serbian gene pool skews in favor of the I2a haplogroup and the P37.2 SNP polymorphism (22 Marjanović, 260 Peričić). However, when Bosnia and Herzegovina is excluded, meaning that only the population within Serbia is examined, then E1a, E1b, R1a, R1b, and I2a haplogroups appear as constituting most of the Serb markers (3 Semino, 23 Underhill). While there is some overflow of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian haplogroup into the Serbian population, the findings show that the I2a haplogroup is not as dominant or prevalent as when Bosnia and Herzegovina is included in the data.

These findings provide clear indication that the Serbian population is made up of many races and tribes that came together over time. In contrast, the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina can date their ancestry to European natives from the last ice age to Paleolithic and later eras.

Familly tree fresco of the Serbian Nemanjić dynasty from the Visoki Dečani monestary in Kosovo.

Texts that were dominated or biased by Slavic and Serb political influence tend to describe the growth of a Slav and South Slav identity as something that originated organically from a central South Slav homeland. However, more recent and objective scholarship demonstrates that there is little to no evidence to backup such grandiose claims. Moreover, the texts fail to explain how a relatively suppressed group could take over such a vast region in east and central Europe in less than two centuries (343 Pohl).

Serfdom

Peasants living under feudal and pre-feudal societies are classified with the status of Serfs. The way they had to conduct their lives is known as ***Serfdom****. Serfs who occupied land, worked for the owner of the land in exchange for protection and other privileges that allowed them to maintain subsistence. In Central and Eastern Europe, Serfdom persisted until the mid-19th century CE, centuries after it had declined in Western Europe (342 Austin) due to the Renaissance and the plague (342 Austin).*

Because of this critical thinking, most objective scholars agree that the Slavs did not have a local homeland. They also agree that the proto-Slavonic language did have a local homeland which became the central cultural characteristic that helped the Slavs coalesce as a group. **The Slavs were able to parlay their expansion into a region that spread from the Oder River in the west to the Dnieper in the east and the Danube in the south** (344 Curta, 345 Geary).

When paired with evidence from Bosnia and Herzegovina, the hypothesis of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian origins of proto-Slavonic language gains credibility and provides a reasonable explanation of how the language remained consistent in a region fraught with tribal warfare, assimilation, and migration. Simply put, Bosnians and Herzegovinians preserved their language.

There is no doubt that the Slavic expansion was decentralized. It happened in stages via distributed epicenters (345 Geary). The Slavs did not have a large fighting force, and the force they had was not a match for the more powerful regional warrior tribes and races. Nonetheless, the Slavs were able to apply force at local levels as they absorbed smaller cultures (346 Pohl), assimilating them into the Slavic fold. The Slavs plundered Byzantine resources a little at a time to avoid military reprisals and eventually made themselves powerful enough to demand a homeland within Byzantium and other parts of Europe.

Middle-class

The ***middle-class*** *is a group of people within a socio-economic hierarchy that sit near the median between the wealthiest and the poorest. In feudal societies, the middle class falls between the working class and upper class. The size of the middle class is an indicator of the health of the society. To maintain or improve economic position, the middle-class prepares future generations to inherit and develop, resulting in a system that produces successful citizens (347 Doob). Each generation strives to be better citizens than the previous.*

CROATS

The region of Pannonia included most of modern-day northern Croatia, spanning east-west largely along the Sava River on its southern border, which separated it from the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Beginning with the 4th century BCE, the northern region of modern-day Croatia, known as Pannonia, was home to groups of Indo-European tribes, such as the *Pannonii*, who were joined or replaced by Celts and Ilyr. The region went through cycles of invasion as new tribes of Celt and Ilyr tried to settle there, and as the Celt empire expanded. Some Ilyr tribes settled in Istria and Dalmatia, situating themselves beyond the immediate line of sight and reach of the Celts.

By about 35 BCE, Augustus Caesar, the first Roman emperor, enlarged his empire by annexing Pannonia, Egypt, Dalmatia, Noricum (Austria and Slovenia), and Raetia (Switzerland, southern Bavaria, and northwestern Italy) (348 Eck). It took the Romans more than four decades to complete their annexation of Pannonia and the coast of modern-day Croatia. The Romans fought a long and difficult war against the Ilyr and extended the label of *Illyricum* to all of Pannonia.

By the 2nd and 3rd centuries CE, groups of Scytho-Sarmatians, known as ***Khoro-athos*** (349 Gluhak), from the Pontic region joined the larger movement of Slavs towards the Balkans and the Adriatic. This group formed alliances with the *Sorabi* and *Srboj* on their westward journey (350 Budak).

It is likely that when they reached the Sava River, the *Khoro-athos* group split, with some members traveling westward following along north of the Sava River, and another going through Bosnia and Herzegovina, south of the Sava.

Between the 4th and 6th centuries CE, little is known about the Croats or Pannonia within modern-day Croatia. The region, like much of Bosnia and Herzegovina, was claimed by the Romans who had by then suppressed Ilyr resistance and piracy in the Adriatic. Pannonia was invaded by Germanic tribes, who are also known for their incursions into Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Within Bosnia and Herzegovina, Christianity had already taken a foothold as demonstrated by numerous artifacts and findings from many areas where early Christians settled. However, in Pannonia, at about the same time, the immigrants settling north of the Sava continued to practice paganism. These immigrants later formed alliances with the *Gačani*, who eventually became known as *Guduscani* and dominated an area that spanned the Plitvice Lakes in the region of Gacka to Zadar on the Adriatic coast. Gacka is about 50 miles west of the Bosnian town of Bihać.

The region was ripe with Ilyr tribes at the time; however, scholars in Croatia claim the *Guduscani* to be of Goth descent. More objective scholarship dismisses that claim (350 Budak) as politically motivated. Over time, Slavic migrants and their descendants followed the Adriatic and ended up in central Dalmatia, where they formed alliances with descendants of the Liburnians. The Liburnians were of a Bronze-age culture that had developed in southern Dalmatia and nearby islands prior to the arrival of Ilyr tribes (351 Batović).

Some scholars indicate the Liburnians were Ilyr; however, it is likely that they assimilated the Ilyr into their fold. Some Slav immigrants, who ended up in the south, settled among the Narenti along the Neretva River (352 Evans) in Bosnia and Herzegovina and along the southern Dalmatian coast. The Narenti were a group that had assimilated and Slavicized the descendants of local Ilyr who had earlier been defeated by the Romans. The Sclaveni themselves had been overwhelmed by the Avar in the 7th century CE, so, they were given protection and allowed to settle in parts of Dalmatia by Byzantine Emperor Heraclius. These groups contributed to the people known as Dalmatians.

Croatian scholarship interprets parts of a Byzantine document, known as *De Administrando Imperio*, to tell of the arrival of a wave of Croat immigrants that liberated Dalmatia from the Avar in the 7th century CE. There is a supposition that it was acceptable to displace the Avar in the first place. Nonetheless, contrary to Croatian claims, the Byzantine document is viewed by contemporary scholars as more of a political propaganda piece, rather than a historical record. In other words, it was mostly propaganda praising Emperor Heraclius for repopulating the Balkans, which the Byzantine portrayed as a region of tribal factions warring on Roman land (353 Curta).

And so, by command of the emperor Heraclius these same Croats defeated and expelled the Avars from those parts, and by mandate of Heraclius the emperor, they settled down in that same country of the Avars, where they now dwell.

After they had fought one another for some years, the Croats prevailed and killed some of the Avars and the remainder they compelled to be subject to them. And so, from that time this land was possessed by the Croats...

Croatian interpretation of Constantine Porphyrogenitus' writings in De Administrando Imperio: 30-31. Of the Croats and of the country they now dwell in (left); 30. Story of the province of Dalmatia (right); 31.

While the document contains valuable information, the description and circumstances of the Croat migration to Byzantium is distorted because of some of its interpreters' political goals (354 Ševčenko), and particularly with Croat interpretations of the text (355 Bury, 356 Krumbacher, 357 Bury, 358 Manojlović, 359 Hauptmann). The interpretations also show Heraclius as a benevolent monarch while overplaying the role of Croats in "saving" Byzantium, and inadvertently downlplaying the threat of the massive Slav migration in the Balkans (360 Klaić). Croat interpretations have tainted scholarship as they lean heavily in favor of establishing the legitimacy of Croats in Dalmatia (361 Živković).

The reality is that Slavs arrived in such large numbers (362 Klaić, 363 Hauptmann) in the region, that the Byzantine either had to go to war against them or allow them to overrun the heart and center of Byzantium. The Byzantine had already encountered numerous challenges with the Slavs, who did not behave like the other factions in the Empire. The Byzantine had to employ the Avar to curb many Slav invasions into Byzantium, which led to the Avar becoming so powerful that they themselves became a threat to the Empire. In the meantime, the Sclaveni, who were victimized by Byzantine-employed Avar, forged an alliance with the Pannonian Avar when a generation of paternally-Avar children began to grow with Sclaveni and other Slav mothers.

The Avar adoption of the Bosnian Slavonic dialect also appeared as problematic for the Byzantine, as the strong *linguistic affinity* could lead to easier alliances among disparate groups, such as the Avar, Slavs, Sclaveni and Bosnians and Herzegovinians.

No matter which option the Byzantine chose, both had unacceptable risks, so Heraclius instead elected to offer the South Slav immigrants and Croat settlers land in the provincial and colonial hinterlands of the Empire. Heraclius chose Dalmatia for several reasons. The South Slavs had already taken up residence in Macedonia, so moving them to Dalmatia would keep them out of the main trade and travel routes to Constantinople. Croats from Pannonia had already started settling in Dalmatia, so moving Slavs there would continue Heraclius' policy of keeping large immigrant groups in the hinterlands. Remote settlements for the Slavs and Croats meant there was a smaller chance of revolutionary attack against the Byzantine capital. Additionally, the region of Dalmatia was suffering from frequent attacks by foreign tribes, so having a large Slav population could act as a deterrent to those attacks.

Heraclius could not afford to continuously deploy his troops to defend the region as he was facing an emerging threat from the Bulgars and other invaders along the eastern Empire.

With Heraclius' tacit approval, the Croats and Slavs overran the Avar in Dalmatia. The Slavs had already been highly militarized. The idea of gains through armed conflict was already seeded within their economic model. The Croats were coming off their own military conquests in the north. Therefore, with the sheer force of numbers, the South Slavs and Croats began assimilating local tribes, or they were unwillingly assimilated by them, depending on the size and defensive capabilities of the local tribe. Stronger tribes prevailed and were able to retain their identity and autonomy; weaker tribes capitulated and were forcefully folded into emerging Croat or Serb ethnicities.

Where the Slavs could sustain violence, or establish superiority by threat of violence, they assimilated local tribes. Where they were weaker, they were assimilated. In both cases, the Slavs established a cultural and political presence in and around Dalmatia alongside their Croat compatriots. For the first time, the Slavs began to coalesce or unify around a territorial and ethno-centric focal point. This point became known as *Raška* or the *Republika Raška*, an inland region covering southern Serbia, parts of Kosovo, northern Montenegro, and a small part of eastern Herzegovina. Similarly, the Croats established a homeland along Dalmatia, absorbing numerous Ilyr tribes and smaller Slav and Sclaveni settlements.

Amid South Slav expansion and unification, the residents of Dalmatia and Dubrovnik created frenetic economic growth through trade and merchant naval shipping in the Adriatic Sea. These economic activities made Dalmatia a more attractive destination for trade and barter than for conquest. Over time, Dalmatia saw Greek, Roman, Sicillian, Arab, Turkish, and other traders, alongside more illicit activities, such as human trafficking and the exchange of stolen goods. Trade cartels and merchant alliances dominated the coastal areas of the region, making Dalmatia a choice destination for pirates, tradesmen, military escorts, and envoys from all over the continent.

By the medieval era, modern-day Croatia was ruled under three powerful and competing empires, the Byzantine, the Avar, and later the Magyar (Hungarians), each vying for control of the region and its population. Between the 8th and 9th centuries CE, two distinct dukedoms emerged in Croatia, one was known as Pannonia inferior, or Lower Pannonia (364 Gwatkin), and the other was a principality in Dalmatia (365 Budak). Croatia was not formed as a kingdom or nation (366 Goldstein) at the time. Over the next two centuries, Dalmatia, Libernium, and Pannonia were ruled under *Frankish* emperors or local Frankish appointees. The *Frankish Empire* was the largest post-Roman *Barbarian* kingdom in Europe. It was centered around the Rhine and Maas rivers, but extended, at times, as far south as Macedonia. The *Barbarians* were groups of Germanic, Hunnic, and other kingdoms that came to dominance after the fall of the Western Roman Empire.

Ljudevit of Posavina making an alliance with the Slavs. Painting by Josip Franjo Mücke from the 19th century. This meeting and alliance between these leaders from Pannonia and Dalmatia likely took place near the Vrbas and Sava Rivers in Bosnia and Herzegovina between 810 CE and 823 CE. It was not the first time, nor the last, that Bosnia and Herzegovina was needed as a neutral ground for peace to be made between different factions in the region. Historians such as Nada Klaić, Sima Ćirković, and Relja Novaković place Ljudevit's eventual escape in Bosnia, either near Kozara or at Grmeč between Bihać and the town of Ključ. There is also the presence of a durable medieval noble house in Bosnia, known as Hrvatinić, whose ancestors could have provided sanctuary for Ljudevit. The Hrvatinić family hails from a small medieval region in Bosnia and Herzegovina known as Donji Kraji, an area around Ključ on the Sana River. There is speculation that the Hrvatinić and their subjects were members of the migrant Khro-athos, who first split north and south of the Sava. By the 13th century CE, the house of Hrvatinić spanned the Kingdom of Croatia alongside the Banate of Bosnia and the Kingdom of Bosnia, and later held large parts of Dalmatia under its rule and sovereignty.

Croat scholars attribute the unification of Dalmatia and Pannonia to Tomislav, who ruled parts of the land in the early 10th century CE (367 Šišić, 368 Smičiklas). The claim is based on a 16th century document that is believed to be a copy of a letter from Pope John X where the Pope refers to Tomislav as *rex Chroatorum* (King of Croatia) (369 Fine, 370 Budak). It was customary to reference generalized concepts and descriptions of regions to establish or declare authority. So, the Pope's declaration should not be taken as a firm indicator of knowledge or scholarship in the actual territory that Tomislav controlled.

Other than the claim of this copy of a letter, there is no conclusive evidence that Tomislav successfully united the two disparate regions that make up present-day Croatia (371 Fine), or that he ruled any territory beyond Dalmatia (372 Codex).

In fact, during Tomislav's reign, the Pannonian Duchy was under the influence of the Principality of Hungary (373 Stephenson). Tomislav also had to forge an alliance with the Byzantine, as they both faced threats by a burgeoning Bulgarian empire under the rule of Tsar Simeon I (374 Omrčanin). Hungary also controlled Istria and did not relinquish the territory during the reign of Tomislav.

The Bulgarians had established a strong presence in the Balkans, extending from the lower course of the Danube River (375 Crampton). They had journeyed from the Caucusian steppe (376 Kim) in the 4th century CE, most likely originating from Oghuric and Euroasian tribes (377 Waldman, 378 McKitterick). It is also likely that the earliest ancestors of the Bulgars were the Antes tribes who were routed by the Avar (379 Bowersock). These tribes settled among Thracians and were quickly assimilated (380 Golden). Their language is believed to be Thracian in nature, which places it among the southern Baltic family of proto-languages. However, as the Avar and Slavs embraced the Bosnian Slavonic language, the Bulgars quickly centered around a varied Slavonic dialect, and completely abandoned their ancestors' languages.

By the 9th century CE, Bulgaria became a dominant power that had forged alliances with Moravia and other regional military leaders. However, Croat Duke Trpimir, who was a vassal of the Franks, took caution against the Bulgars. By the mid-ninth century CE, the Bulgars had already waged wars against the Slavs of Raška. That prompted King Louis of the Franks to incent Trpimir to attack the Bulgars (381 Grot), to ensure that their empire did not extend into Frank territory.

In 854 CE, the Croat vassal of the Franks took a military force into northeastern Bosnia, where it met a response by the Bulgar army. The battle seems to have been inconclusive, with both sides retreating to their own domains (382 Golden). Trpimir sued for peace and his Bulgarian counterpart, Khan Boris, accepted. With peace, the Bulgars withdrew to their borders at the Drina River.

Croat scholars try to point out that because the Bulgars accepted the border east of the Drina, the territory west of the Drina fell under the Duchy of Croatia. While this might have been true for parts of present-day eastern Croatia in areas north of the Sava River, Bosnia was forming a nobility that was neither subordinate to the Franks nor the Croats. Michael of Zahumlije was an ally of Boris.

The tensions among Bosnia's two powerful militaristic neighbors, the Croats to the north and west, and the Bulgars to the north and east, further fueled the tensions that the entire region was being subjected to by the growing presence of the Slavs in Raška. By the 10th century CE, a new duke emerged as the leader of the Croats, Tomislav. In 925 CE, Tomislav was declared king of Croatia.

Map showing the major principalities in the region surrounding Bosnia and Herzegovina at the time of Croatian King Tomislav, who ruled only Dalmatia. Tomislav's rule did not extend to Zahumlje, Travunja, Raška, or Bosnia. A small part of southwestern Bosnia was inhabited by Slavs in a principality known as Raška. This map was described by Croatian historian Nada Klaić, showing that most of Bosnia was not under the control of the Croats. In later times, the Bulgarian Khanate expanded into Byzantium, nearly isolating Bosnia and Zahumlije from the rest of Byzantium. Croat scholars prematurely and incorrectly interpret that isolation as absorption into the Kingdom of Croats. While Bosnia and Zahumlije might have been under limited control of their erstwhile Byzantine rulers, they were by no means under the control of Croatians. Bosnians and Zahumlijans floundered without central leadership or authority, but their territory was not annexed or included in the political or militaristic fold of the Kingdom of Croats or other Croatians.

In 924 CE, Simeon of Bulgaria initiated an attack on Zaharija (modern-day Serbia) and crossed the Drina River into Bosnia with an armed force that overwhelmed the Byzantine. Simeon's goal was to march on the capital of Byzantium (383 Rogers) because that was the only way he could become emperor. By Byzantine and Christian law, only the Archbishop of Constantinople could ordain anyone king. So, Simeon would remain prince until he conquered Constantinople.

On his march to Constantinople, Simeon forced his way through Slav territory in Zaharija. In the raid on Zaharija, Simeon's forces routed large numbers of Slavs, who fled and found refuge in Byzantine territory. They took advantage of a treaty with the Byzantine, which allowed them to find sanctuary in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Dalmatia. The Slavs quickly formed an alliance with Tomislav and convinced him that Simeon's army was marching to overthrow him.

The village of Lukomir stands as the highest altitude village in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is renowned as one of the longest continually inhabited villages in Europe (384 Clancy). *The highlands around Lukomir are typical of the few descriptions of the location of the Battle of the Bosnian Highlands fought between Tsar Simeon I of Bulgaria and Tomislav King of the Croats. Photo: Kathleen Franklin, Marysville, CA.*

At the same time, Simeon feared that a Slav union with Tomislav's forces could result in an uncontrollable revolution among the waves of Slavs who were coalescing around Zaharija. When Simeon learned about Tomislav's alliance, he sent a small contingent of his forces ahead of engaging in deep battle against the Byzantine (385 Fine). So, rather than await a surprise or untimely attack by the Croats, Simeon turned into Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the intention of marching across the territory to square off against Tomislav and his forces (386 Goldstein, 387 Fine).

However, when Simeon's Bulgarian army turned into Bosnia and Herzegovina, they faced a surprise ambush by Tomislav's forces (386 Goldstein), who had chosen a strategic and advantageous location for the attack (386 Goldstein). The battle became known as ***Bitka na bosanskim visoravnima,*** "Battle of the Bosnian Highlands." While historians mark the battle correctly as taking place between the Drina and Bosna Rivers, most of them incorrectly attribute the location as the extent of Tomislav's rule. The fact that Simeon's forces were surprised is a good indication that they did not recognize Bosnia and Herzegovina as Croat territory; otherwise they would have been more prepared.

Many Croat and other scholars blindly circumscribe to Tomislav control of nearly all of Bosnia's territory, from Dalmatia to the Bosna River (387 Fine). This notion was propagated by Croat scholars who wanted to establish an *urhiemat* or homeland of origin, for Croatians (388 Pantelić). So, they declared that Bosnia was a part of Croatia in the 10th century CE. The fact is that Croatia was not established as a unified state (based on present borders) in the middle ages, except for a period that lasted less than a decade, and was even then fragmented and relatively unstable.

The Byzantine benefitted from the joint military venture between Tomislav and the Slavs in the prolonged conflict the Byzantine had with the burgeoning Bulgars. Engaging Tomislav and the Slavs delayed the Bulgars from reaching Constantinople and slightly weakened their military power.

Simeon's forces lost the battle of the Bosnian Highlands, but Simeon, nonetheless, continued on to Constantinople. He retained enough strength and manpower to continue his mission.

If Simeon had really intended to attack the hinterland of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as suggested by Croat scholars, then he certainly had the capacity to do so again. Yet, he turned away from Bosnia and Zahumlije and resumed course for Constantinople. The territory of Bosnia and Zahumlije did not change because of the war with Simeon (383 Rogers), meaning Bosnia and Zahumlije remained intact.

Tomislav's forces were weakened to the point that they no longer posed a threat to the Bulgar march to Constantinople. The war in Bosnian Highlands cost Tomislav severely. The military cost was high as was the political outfall, resulting in civil strife, contention with the Slavs for power, and a burgeoning debt to the Byzantine. After Tomislav's death, the civil wars that had plagued his rule, escalated in the territory of modern-Croatia when Pannonia and Dalmatia went through a period of unmanaged civil strife and contention for rule by domestic and foreign powers. Among the contenders were Slav, Roman and Hungarian feudal and monarchical regimes that exploited various dynastic struggles that were playing out both within Croatia and its neighboring states and statelets.

The territory of Pannonia and Dalmatia saw a period of uncertainty under rule by the successors in the Trpimirović and Svetoslav dynasties, culminating with a succession crisis after the death of King Demetrius (Dmitar) Zvonimir (389 Britannica).

After this period, Croatia's three major regions were thrust into a civil power struggle that opened the doors to opportunistic dynasties seeking to usurp strategic coastal and rich inland resources. The dynasties not only vied for territories that were formerly under the control of Croatian rulers, they also had their eyes set on Bosnia and Zahumlije and some of the smaller statelets that had formed around it. A result of the power-void was that Hungary was able to get a foothold in the region, gaining suzerainty over Dalmatia and parts of Macedonia, but not Zahumlije.

Bosančica

Bosančica Glagolitic script presented here in order of Latin (Anglicized) alphabet for convenience. This Glagolitic script, known as Bosančica, became a peer to the Glagolitic script of Cyril and Methodius. Both Bosančica and Cyril's Glagolitic were developed at nearly the same time. Both are based on Greek uncial script and Phoenician. Bosančica was among the first scripts in the region that moved away from syllabic form, lending preference to consonants and vowels, even before Cyril's Glagolitic variation. At least a century after Bosančica was documented, further modifications were made to Glagolitic script which spawned the modern script that we know as Cyrillic.

A scriptural language known as ***Bosančica*** was developed by scholars in Bosnia and Herzegovina (390 Balić). While it is not certain exactly who the scholars were, it is possible that they were among migrants to Bosnia and Herzegovina who had taken refuge from the Bulgarian empire. At the time, Bosnia and Herzegovina saw two major waves of Christian influence. One was coming from the natives who had embraced Christianity in earlier years. The other was from immigrants who were persecuted in their homeland for their religious beliefs.

It is likely that the immigrants' church, made up mostly of refugees from the Bulgarian movement east of the Drina River, needed a means of communicating its message to the broader community in Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, the language of the Bosnians and Herzegovinians was different than the dialect of the Greeks and the Bulgarians, who spoke a form of Thracian or Turkic (391 Waldman) *Oghuric*. So, a need arose for a script that could conform to the local Bosnian and Herzegovinian dialect and vocalization. The Greek script system was insufficient as it was descriptive of the sounds of Greek syllables, which could not accommodate the Bosnian Slavonic vocalizations.

Bosančica is classified as a Cyrillic form of script (392 Balić) because it is like a written script that is attributed to St. Cyril and his brother Methodius. Even though the authors of *Bosančica* have not been identified, linguists commonly place it within the Cyrillic classification. *Bosančica* was based on Greek *uncial* (pronounced *un-she-al*), a style of writing where all the letters are in capital form. *Uncial* was used from the 4th to 8th centuries CE by Greek and various Latin scribes in the region (393 Cambridge).

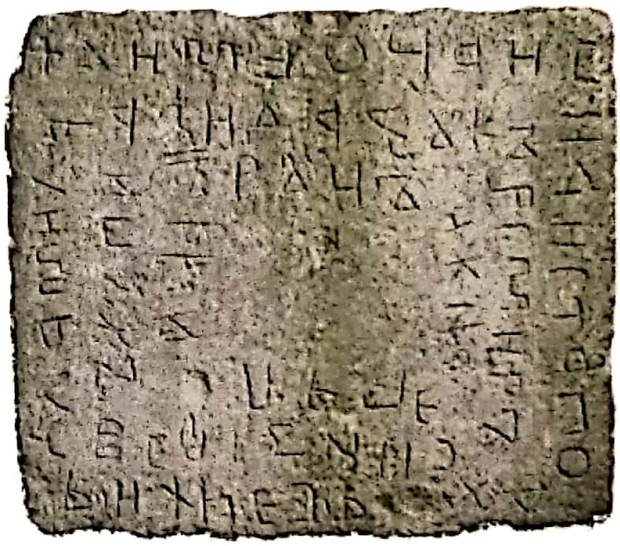
Bosančica was developed to make Christian liturgy available in the Bosnian and Herzegovinian dialect, also known as the Bosnian Slavonic language. *Bosančica* might have been a variation of the script developed by Cyril and Methodius; however, there is no indication that Cyril and Methodius didn't acquire their script or borrow the characteristics of their Glagolitic script from *Bosančica*. Cyril and Methodius were known for borrowing ideas and leveraging scholarship developed by others. The Bulgarians had been evangelizing Christianity in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and it is very likely that they could have taken *Bosančica* to Cyril and Methodius. In either case, *Bosančica* was developed by Bosnians (394 Basler). While the exact authors of the script are not known, *Bosančica* was embraced by scholars from the northern coast of present-day Croatia to its southern coastal tip, and of course, across the realm of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The script became so popular that Bosnia and Herzegovina's Slavonic speaking neighbors began renaming it and claiming it as their own. In Croatia, *Bosančica* began to be called *bosansko-hrvatski* (Bosnian-Croatian), *hrvatska glagolica* (Croatian Glagolitic), or *hrvačko pismo* (Croatian Letters). In later years, once Cyrillic had established its dominance, the *Bosančica* script was given yet more names such as *bosansko-hrvatska ćirilica* (Bosnian-Croatian Cyrillic), *bosansko-dalmatinska ćirilica* (Bosnian-Dalmatian Cyrillic), *hrvatska ćirilica* (Croatian Cyrillic) and *zapadna ćirilica* (Western

Cyrillic). Slavs in Bosnia and Herzegovina referenced it as *bosansko ćirilica* (Bosnian Cyrillic), and later *srbska slova*.

In contrast to *Bosančica*, Cyril and Methodius' Glagolitic script was not used as frequently, or as widely, as it had a lot of limitations when it came to use in the context of Bosnian Slavonic. Where *Bosančica* differed primarily from Cyril and Methodius' Glagolitic was its rejection of stylistic characters. Cyril's Glagolitic continued reliance on Greek forms, styles and spellings. *Bosančica* introduced new characters that were dissimilar in shape, and their concatenation resulted in differentiated spelling, which was simpler and easier to adapt to the local dialect.

Within the first few decades of its development, *Bosančica* achieved broad scholastic and ecclesiastic reach. The substantial number of monuments and artifacts that were engraved with it, across a vast region, and through such diverse domains, is a clear indicator that the script attained mass appeal. Artisans, engravers, public officials, church clergy, scholars, teachers, evangelists, emissaries, scribes, and even tradesmen had to be among the first to learn the script. **The broad regional reach of the script required many experts who could take the script with them on travels and teach it to others in diverse disciplines.**



Humačka or Humska ploča, the Tablet of Humac is the oldest discovered monument inscribed with the Bosančica Glagolitic script. The tablet is housed in the Franciscan monastery in the town of Humac near the Herzegovinian town of Ljubuški.

Bosnia and Herzegovina's documents written in *Bosančica* were destroyed in campaigns against the Bosnian church, followed by Slav and Hungarian invasions. However, enough artifacts survived to tell the story of how broadly and deeply the script was adopted. **The oldest discovered monument inscribed with *Bosančica* is *Humačka ploča* (also known as *Humska ploča*), the Tablet of Humac, which is estimated to date to the 10th or 11th century CE.** Other artifacts inscribed in *Bosančica* have been discoverd in Dalmatia, Serbia and the Croatian islands in the Adriatic Sea.

Mavro (Mauro) Orbini (1563-1614), Dubrovnik

Mauro Obrini, a Dominican monk, linguist and author, stated in the 16th century CE, "Of all the people who speak Slavic, the Bosnians have the sweetest and most eloquent language, and it is because they are the only ones who today watch the purity of the language" (395 Orbini).

Bosančica Over Time

Many artifacts and documents demonstrate the durability of the *Bosančica* script. The care with which they were preserved is a testament to how thoroughly the script and language were embedded in society, not just in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but in the neighboring dukedoms, republics and statelets as well. The following are some examples:

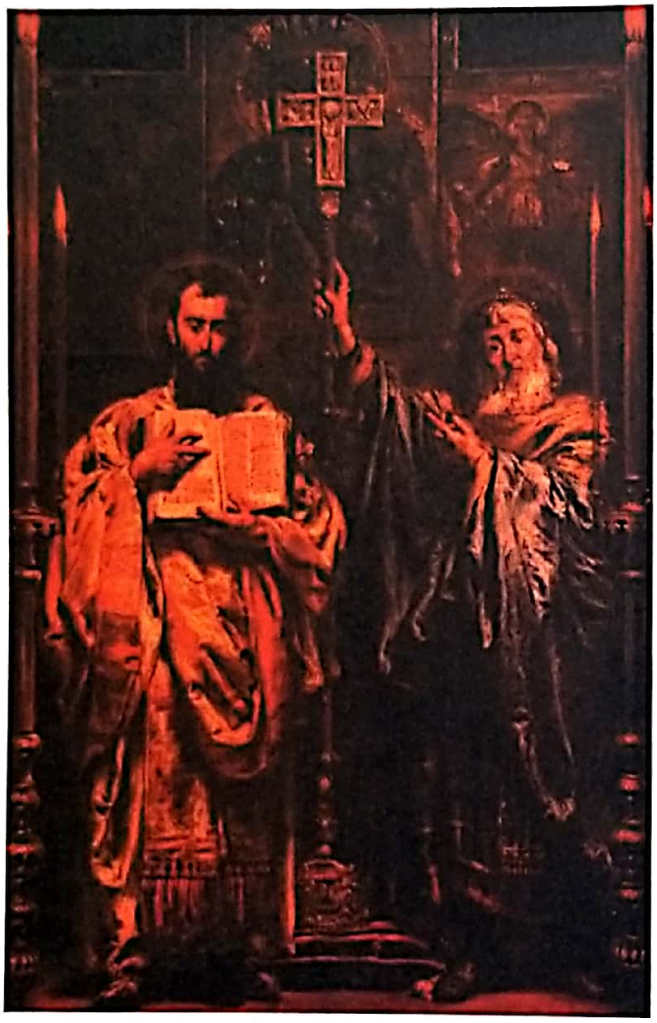
Artifact	*Date*	*Description*
Humačka plošča, the Tablet of Humac	*10th century CE*	*The oldest monument inscribed in Bosančica.*
Povaljski prag, Lintel of Povlja	*1184 CE*	*Inscribed threshold on the archway to the monestary of St. John on the island of Brač*
Povelja Kulina bana, Charter of Ban Kulin)	*Aug. 29, 1189*	*Trade agreement between the Banate of Bosnia and the Republic of Ragusa*
Miroslavov missal, Miroslav's Gospel	*12th century CE*	*Richly decorated gospel commissioned by Miroslav of Hum,*
Povaljska lista, Charter of Povalj	*1250 CE*	*Property description of St. John's monestary on the island of Brač, in Croatia*
Đuraj Kačića lista, Document of the Duke of Croatia	*1278 CE*	*Diplomatic document from the Dukedom of Croatia's Duke Juraj (Đuraj) Kačića*
Hvalov zbornik, Hval's manuscript	*14th century CE*	*Commissioned in honor of Hval*
Hrvojov missal	*1404 CE*	*Gospel commissioned in honor of Hrvoje Hrvatinić, Duke of Bosnia, King of Croatia*
Poljski statut	*1440 CE*	
Chronicle of Pope Dukljanin	*16th century CE*	
Books of Franciscan monks	*16th to 18th centuries CE*	*About 40 books and many more manuscripts on various subjects and themes*

Missals (Codex) of Hval (l) and Hrvoje (r) were developed for Bosnian Duke Hrvoje Vukčić Hrvatinić in the 15th century CE. Both are ritual texts that serve Christian liturgy in Bosančica and the Bosnian language.

Bosančica served as a cultural ambassador of Bosnia, with widespread use and influence that stretched from Dubrovnik to Macedonia, Krajina, and islands in the Adriatic Sea (396 Basler).

The script was held dearly by Bosnia and Herzegovina's Christian clergy until the arrival of the Austro-Hungarians and the complete conversion of Bosnia and Herzegovina's Christians to either Catholicism or Eastern Orthodoxy. By that time, Bosnia and Herzegovina's Orthodox church had completely abandoned *Bosančica* and embraced Cyrillic as the script for its liturgy. To preserve *Bosančica,* the important linguistic artifact and testament to the identity of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian people during both Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian eras, Bosnia's Muslim families and scholars took it upon themselves to preserve *Bosančica* manuscripts and teach the script among their masses and adherents. That tradition continues to the present time.

CYRIL & METHODIUS



Artist's perception of Cyril and Methodius, painting by Jan Matejko, 1885.

In the 9th century CE, Prince Boris I of Bulgaria converted to Christianity. Boris was feeling threatened by powerful Byzantine and Roman forces that were both eyeing Bulgaria as a prize. He had also seen the wrath of the Bishop of Rome taken out on subjects that did not pledge allegience to either Roman or Constantinople churches of Christendom.

Playing both sides against each other, Boris thought it prudent to begin the Christianization of Bulgaria (397 Vlasto). With the conversion of the state's official religion from *Tengriism* to Roman or Western Christianity, Boris secured Bulgaria from further Byzantine interference.

Boris was motivated to unite the Bulgarian masses who were already divided among *Tengrin* Bulgarians and pagan Slavs. By enforcing a uniting religion, Boris was able to quell threats of disunity in the kingdom. While the Patriarchy in Constantinople and the Papacy in Rome were vying for control, the offer of bringing Bulgarian masses into the fold of Christianity gave Boris negotiating power.

After attempts at negotiating a position within the Christian ecclesiastical hierarchy, Boris disentangled his church from the split between Rome and Constantinople by declaring an autonomous Bulgarian church (398 Sullivan).

In 885 CE, Boris gave refuge to disciples of theologians Constantine Cyril and his brother Mikhail or Michael (later renamed Methodius), to develop a Bulgarian script and establish theological schools. The disciples had been banished from Great Moravia for preaching Christianity using the Slavic liturgy, which was prohibited by Pope Stephen V (399 McBrien) of Rome.

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The early Cyrillic alphabet made no distinction between capital and lower-case letters.

Cyril and Methodius were previously tasked with developing a script to convey Biblical readings in the dialect of Slavs in Great Moravia, a territory in the region of the Morava River in the present-day Czech Republic.

Slavs in the region did not want to fall under the Frankish rule of King Louis the German, who had supported Prince Rastislav to become king of Great Moravia. By requesting evangelists and missionaries from Constantinople, Rastislav sought to assert his independence from the Franks. Rastislav had already expelled Roman missionaries and he needed the protection of Constantinople without the overwhelming power of the Byzantine army.

An unintended consequence of Byzantine evangelism in Great Moravia was that Orthodox Christianity was imposed on Romanized Christians. That resulted in a backlash, forcing Rastislav to seek out a Slavicized liturgy. Thus, he employed Cyril and Methodius for the task.

Tengriism

Tengriism is a belief system that worships a sky god and Mother Earth. It is steeped in placing spiritual essence in objects and embraces ideas from both polytheism (the worship of multiple gods) and monotheism (400 Fergus).

Cyril and Methodius were linguistically qualified because their father was Byzantine Greek and their mother was probably a Slav (401 Philip). Cyril had served Rastislav well when he was sent to improve relations between the Abbasid Caliph Al-Mutawakkil and the Byzantine empire. As such, Cyril was versed in Arabic and Hebrew. Therefore, in the development of the Slavicized Glagolitic script, Cyril leveraged his extensive knowledge of languages and literary skill to lead the development of an alphabet and phonology that was used in Great Moravia and later exported to Bulgaria. Many scholars believe that while Cyril led the effort, it was Methodius and the students at the academy where Cyril taught, who constructed the alphabet. Other scholars argue that the script was developed for the large number of Macedonian Slavs who had entered Rastislav's territory. In any event, Cyrilic and *Bosančica* are likely to have been developed at nearly the same time, or either could have come just a bit before the other.

Early Islam in the North

Bulgarian drinking bowl used by both Christians and Muslims. The graphic designs on the bowl are of Muslim origin from mid-16th century CE Bulgaria. Source: Walters Art Museum, Baltimore MD.

By the 8th century, intellectuals and scholars in Bosnia and Herzegovina were introduced to Islam by tribes from the Khazar Khaganate and scouts and travelers from Bulgaria. The Khazars were themselves influenced during wars with the Arabs in the late 7th century CE, and the Bulgars were influenced by the Ghassanids.

By the 9th century CE, the Turkic people in the region individually began conversion to Islam. Their Khaganate was struggling in campaigns by Rus' Prince Svietoslav to the point that they had to seek help from the Turks. When the Turks came to their aid, the Jewish King of the Khazars converted to Islam (402 Petrukhin). The Islamic religion was not adopted by their states until much later. As Islam spread throughout Central Asia, the Bulgars of the Volga and the Volga Tatars adopted Islam by the 10th century CE (403 De Weese).

Bosnia and Herzegovina's curiosity towards Islam began when Muslim Bulgar traders and missionaries began evangelical activity in the region (404 Barford). Bulgar Muslim traders appeared along the common travel routes in Bosnia and Herzegovina's medieval countryside (405 Haverić, 406 Džafić). There are journal entries about Arab Muslim seafarers traveling up the Neretva (407 Hadžijahić). Scholars have noted how slaves from the region were taken by the Romans (408 Solojev) to parts of the empire where Islam was emerging, such as Spain, Anatolia, Sicily, Tunis and Syria (405 Haverić, 408 Solojev).

In most scholarly works, the slaves were characterized as Slavs, which included both Bosnians and Herzegovinians (409 Tadić) among the Slavs and many eventually converted to Islam (410 Stewart). This is known because there are records of how these converts became public servents or civil administrators either in the Arab Caliphate or Byzantine Principalities (408 Solojev).

There are also significant indicators that as early as the 7th century CE, the Byzantine provinces and hinterlands were attacked not just by Slavs, but also by Sassanids and Arab Ghassanid warriors and raiders (411 Imamović). Bosnian and Herzegovinian Bogomils that lived in the Byzantine hinterlands had repeated contact with Islam in South Europe, which eventually led to the most successful and sustained conversions of early Bosnian and Herzegovinian society to Islam. In addition to Bulgar influences, the Bogomils were also directly exposed to Islamic ideology and inspiration emanating from the Arabic peninsula (411 Imamović).

The *monotheistic* appeal of Islam resonated with local intellectuals and religious leaders, especially among those who were isolated from Bosnia's emerging Christian church. Even among Bosnia's early Christians, the Islamic reverence of Jesus and strict belief in a single divine being were parallels that quickly led to discourse in Bosnia and Herzegovina's scholarly circles.

Bosnia's church certainly saw Islam as a competitive ideology and took measures to insulate itself, its leadership and parishes from exposure to the new ideology. While the number of converts to Islam in 10th century Bosnia and Herzegovina is undetermined, the more the Bulgars migrated to Bosnia and Herzegovina, the more they brought Islamic knowledge and tradition to the country.

No matter the degree of adoption, Bosnians and Herzegovinians saw intrinsic affinity between Islam and their *monotheistic* principles, mythological beliefs, and cultural practices.

It was this religious affinity that endeared Bosnia and Herzegovina's Bogomils to ideologically accept Islam and become the religion's most ardent converts. Beyond ideological continuity, Bosnia and Herzegovina's population needed relief from Roman and Byzantine dominance and exploitation. **Bosnians and Herzegovinians who were not directly identifiable as Christians were subject to capture as slaves, taken to open human trafficking markets and sold in places such as Dubrovnik, Zadar, and other coastal towns on the Adriatic coast** (412 Halilović).

KINGDOM OF CROATS

Pannonia and Dalmatia were briefly brought together under the rule of Kings Petar Krešimir IV of the Trpimirović house and Dmitar Zvonimir of the Svetoslavić house, both of Slavic origin. Krešimir ruled Dalmatia, while Zvonimir ruled in Pannonia as Ban of Slavonia (413 Šišić). The region was known as Sclavonia (land of the Sclaveni), and later became Slavonia. Krešimir elevated Zvonimir to *Ban of Croatia*, allowing Dalmatia and Slavonia to unite (414 Klaić). Krešimir and Zvonimir's success was due to two major factors. First, the Roman church needed an ally in the Balkans, in the aftermath of the East-West Schism of 1054 CE which split the Roman Catholics from the Eastern Orthodoxy. Pope Gregory VII prohibited the churh liturgy to be delivered in the Slavic language (415 Budak), and he condemned *Bosančica*, the Glagolitic script (416 Curta). Under these conditions Krešimir made large financial donations and bequeathed property to the Roman church in return for recognition. The second factor was that Zvonimir was granted more authority than he could gain on his own. So, he naturally accepted the alliance with Krešimir.

Within four or five years, the island of Kvarnar and the eastern coast of Istrija were attacked and occupied by Ulric I of Slovenia (414 Klaić). Croatia was once again divided. Zvonimir eventually liberated the region and turned it back under his authority. However, to do so, he had to negotiate a deal with Hungary (417 Nemet).

The deal was fraught with complexity since Zvonimir was married to Helena, the daughter of King Béla I of Hungary, who had been ousted by Solomon (414 Klaić), Béla's nephew. **Solomon had his sights on occupying all of Croatia and parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, so he quickly created an alliance and sent forces into Croatia to "assist" Zvonimir.**

After Zvonimir's death in 1089 CE, Croatia's downward spiral accelerated under the rule of Stephen II of the house of Trpimirović, as it faced challenges from the Roman church (413 Šišić), infighting between noblemen (418 Fine) in the provinces (called *županje*), and invasions by the dominant and militarily mobile Normans (415 Budak, 419 Klaić).

Stephen was followed by Petar Snačić the last native ruler of Croatia. **Petar unified the region along the Adriatic but could not extend his rule past the Sava River or encroach into Bosnia and Herzegovina.** By 1102 CE, Croatia entered a union with Hungary where the King of Hungary would reign, but the Croats would maintain a parliament, known as *sabor*, and have a viceroy as representative of the King of Hungary. Under the deal, Croatian nobles kept their land and titles. The kingdom was called *Kraljevina Hrvata*, or the Kingdom of Croats.

"Dolazak Hrvata na Jadran," Arrival of the Croats at the Adriatic Sea. 19th century painting by Croatian painter Oton Iveković. Iveković mostly concerned himself with historical art, but also dabbled in religious themes and drove representations of Croatian history. A majority of Iveković's work was interpretive, meaning that it was based on a very narrow and nationalistic interpretation of folk tales and mythical lore.

Eventhough Iveković's work is not based on historical accuracy, his artistry and poignant reinforcement of Croat identity has influenced generations of Croatians. More recently it has initiated debate among scholars about the origins of Croatian society.

In the painting above, Iveković draws a tale of an affluent tribe that has arrived at a destination overlooking a coastline. The robes, colors, state of material used for weapons, and grooming of the individuals in the painting give the impression that the early Croats were well-off and generally prosperous people. The scene leads to an interpretation that after examining the coastal site, these founders of the Croatian state chose the site and claimed it for their people. This type of imagery completely overlooks the indigenous population of Ilyr that lived in the region. The Ilyr stretched from Pannonia, through Istrija, Dalmatia and down into Dubrovnik, as well as further south along the Adriatic.

The painting outright creates misinformation about how Croatia was formed. It was not formed by the arrival of a homogenous tribe. While many tribes arrived in the region, they assimilated other tribes, and some were assimilated by others. Over years of struggle, the people of Croatia came together into a state.

Bosnia & Herzegovina's Christians

Christianity arrived in parts of the region surrounding Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Apostolic age. There is mention in Paul's epistle to the Romans *(Romans 15, 99)* where Paul says, "*...from Jerusalem, and round about even unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.*" Paul is known to have traveled to Macedonia, so it is likely that he was referencing Macedonia as a frontier to Ilyricum. That frontier included Bosnia and Herzegovina.

There is also indication that Titus, a student of Paul, preached in Dalmatia from about 55 CE to 61 CE. Dalmatia was also a part of Ilyricum and later included within the sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

After the Edict of Milan in 313 CE, Christians in the Roman and Byzantine empires could practice their faith without threat of reprisals from the state (174 Bowder). This allowed Christianity to grow more rapidly across the empire, including Dalmatia, Herzegovina and central Bosnia, where several important representatives of Bosnia's domestic church engaged in dialog and discourse with Roman colonies.

At the beginning of the 4th century CE, the Christian Bishop of Solin, Domnius, better known as Dujam (later *Sveti Duje*, Saint Domno), was executed when he opposed Diocletian's rise to power. Diocletian ensured that the execution was public by holding it in the Solin amphitheater. Diocletian wanted to show the public and other opponents that his rule was not to be challenged.

However, despite Diocletian's brutal tactics against Christians, the followers of Jesus found refuge in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where they were out of the reach of Roman and Byzantine persecution. The followers began a church, which survived the next century in the safety of Bosnia and Herzegovina's relative isolation and culture of tolerance and acceptance.

At the synod in Split in 530 CE, Bishop Andrija represented the *See of Bosnia and Herzegovina* from a village near the town of Mošunj, between Travnik and Zenica (420 Mesihović). At the synod, the Bishops concluded that the *See of Bosnia and Herzegovina* should be recognized.

A diocese in the village of *Bistue Vetus*, near the town of Bugojno, was recognized by the Romans in 533 CE. Findings in Bosnia and Herzegovina indicate a well-organized religious life prior to the arrival of the Avar. The *Bistue* were safe havens for Christians. They were out of the way of major travel routes, yet not so remote that they could not be integrated into the church's hierarchy. Other dioceses were established at *Martari* in Konjic and *Delmium* in Tomislavgrad.

SLAVS IN DALMATIA

Walls of Split as seen by Scottish architect Robert Adam (1728-1792), The walls were built by Diocletian to protect against Slav and Avar naval attack.

By the 10th century CE, Frankish and Byzantine writers began referencing the region of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Dalmatia. Regions surrounding Bosnia were considered by the Byzantine as Bulgar, Roman, or Zetan (modern-day Albanian) (421 Fine).

At the same time, South Slavs from Dalmatia and Zahumlije quickly established relations with the powerful King Tomislav of Dalmatia (422 Fine), to carve out a home for themselves in the region. Prior to that, Byzantine Emperor Diocletian had built walls around his villa at Split, Croatia, to defend against attacks by Slav and Avar naval forces.

Maintaining a safe distance from the Bulgars, who had expelled them from their encampments east of the Drina River, the Slavs waited until the Bulgars were weakened by the Byzantine. In the mean time, the Slavs united with Tomislav's forces, possibly with a view to leverage Tomislav's large army in a war against the Bulgarians (423 Kobyliński). History has recorded that Tsar Simeon I of the First Kingdom of Bulgaria turned into Bosnia and Herzegovina by crossing the Drina River on his way to attack Tomislav. However, Simeon's motives to attack Tomislav in his Dalmatian seat, clear across Bosnia and Herzegovina, are inconsistent with the mission and purpose of the Bulgarian kingdom. Some scholars state that the Slavs created false indications of an impending Bulgarian attack, just so they could mobilize Tomislav's powerful army. The result was that the Bulgars were defeated in an ambush during the famous battle known as *Bitka na Bosanskim visoravnima*, or Battle on Bosnia's High Plateaus. In any case, the Slavs were trying to recover lands they had lost to the Bulgarian kingdom (423 Kobyliński). **While Simeon appears to have lost the battle in Bosnia's southeastern plateau, the Bulgarians did not recede from their stronghold east of the Drina, where the Slavs were planning to occupy territory.**

By the 11th century CE, Slavs returned to territory east of the Drina and the Byzantine prevailed in the long war against the Bulgars, only to face challenge from the emerging power of the Hungarian empire. Over the next three centuries, the region suffered from power struggles between Hungarian and Byzantine rulers.

ZAHUMLIJE

"Splitski crkveni sabor" synod at Split, Croatia in 925 CE as Michael presided over Zahumlije. Painting by Celestin Medović.

Zahumlije (also Zachumlija) was a principality in Bosnia and Herzegovina and southern Dalmatia that became home to diverse groups of people from the region. Tracing its earliest populations to the Paleolithic era, through Neolithic times, Zahumlije saw migrant tribes and settlers ranging from the Ilyr to Romans, Slavs, and Zetans, from all socio-economic levels. The territory went through periods of independence but was mostly subjected to annexation by more powerful neighbors and foreigners.

The word Zahumlija dates to the era of proto-Slavonic and was likely borrowed from the proto-Germanic word for hill, *xulmu* (pronounced "zulm") (424 Fasmer), which morphed, and possibly borrowed from, Turkish constructs, into modern Bosnian as *dulum*, meaning a thousand square meters of land. Zahumlije is also known as Hum for short, which is a mountain in Herzegovina.

Slavs made their way in large numbers to the Balkans first during the reign of Byzantine Emperor Justinian I in the mid-6th century. Shortly after that, they raided Thessalonica with nearly 100,000 soldiers. Having established their strength through numbers, they plundered Thrace in 545 CE, crossed Niš and ended up in Dalmatia (425 Janković).

During the early 7th century, Dalmatia faced relentless attacks by the Avar, who pillaged towns and enslaved or displaced local populations. Some Avar took Slavs as slaves and concubines, or they settled down with them in the region. Fearing further attacks by the Avar, Dalmatia's Slavs took refuge further inland into the central part of Zahumlije (426 Fine).

By the 10th century CE, Zahumlije established its independence under the rule of Mihajlo Višević (427 Mandić), known as Michael of Zahumlije, who ruled from 910 to 930 CE. Michael made an alliance with the Bulgarians and Byzantine, who had been at war with each other. This attested to Michael's diplomacy and negotiation skills. Up to that point, neither the Slavs nor the Bulgars accepted alliances with anyone that was not the sworn enemy of the other. Yet, Michael was able to leverage his powers of persuasion and diplomatic skill at achieving a relevant enough status that both warring groups accepted an alliance with his people.

Michael has been recorded in history as a principal within the Christian church of Bosnia and Zahumlije, and for bringing more modern Christian ideology to Bosnia's otherwise secluded and isolated clergy. Michael was challenged by the increasing power of Raška, an area adjacent to Zahumlije that was occupied by Slavs who were politically and militarily aligned with Slavs east of the Drina.

It is under Michael's rule that the Slav population in and around Dalmatia first saw differences of political alignment and interests. Up to that point, the Slavs behaved as a cohesive, *militaristic* group, but with little diversity in their political agenda. It is likely that their large numbers and lack of a permanent homeland drove their behavior and priorities. The Slavs in Zahumlije rallied behind Michael, while the Slavs in Raška continued to rebel and sought opportunities to expand their fiefdom into a kingdom.

With the alliance in place, Michael was able to curb Slav expansion of Raška, which allowed him to turn his attention to other parts of Zahumlije, such as the southwestern region where other tribes were encroaching and threatening the population and their agriculture.

Banate of Bosnia

Between the 10th and 11th centuries CE, imperial struggle for control of territories in the Balkans was heavily contested between the Bulgars, Hungarians and the incumbent Byzantine. As the Byzantine Empire faced challenges between its western and eastern factions, growing Bulgar power reached into Macedonia, Dalmatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Duklija, a region that covered parts of present-day Montenegro. In Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia, the Bulgars already had influence through their prior evangelical practices.

While nobility in the region was focused on the established military powers, there was a growing but unnoticed threat that was forming because of the massive influx of Slavs to the region. The Slavs were loosely organized into disparate principalities, that alternatively pledged and reneged on their commitments of loyalty to both the Bulgars and the Byzantine. By the middle of the 10th century CE, a Slavic ruler by the name of Časlav brought several Slav principalities under his rule. Up to his time, the principalities were run by oligarchs (426 Fine) with little cohesiveness. Časlav was a successor in the Vlastimirović dynasty, the first Slav dynasty in the region (427 Mandić). As such, he wielded great power and became a unifying leader to the Slavs.

When the Magyars (Hungarians) attacked East-Central Europe, Časlav saw an opportunity to stretch his influence, so he mounted a campaign to attack the advancing Magyars on the banks of the Drina River in Bosnia and Herzegovina (428 Ćorović). Časlav enlisted the help of Bosnia's nobility and jointly the two forces stopped the Magyars from marching to Thrace. The Magyar leader, Kisa (Kiš in Bosnian) was slain in the battle. Had they been allowed to continue their march the Magyars would have overrun Slav settlements and agricultural colonies that were largely undefended and disorganized. Časlav's engagement with the Magyars is seen by some historians as a precept to annex Bosnia (429 Kamakamova). However, Časlav was more concerned with extending his rule over Slav principalities east of the Drina and south into present-day Montenegro, so he did not need to annex Bosnia. It was more important for Časlav to prevent the Magyars from reaching Slav principalities. That way, Časlav could name himself ruler over them, which he did.

In 960 CE Časlav was slain by Kisa's widow. **In the wake of the ensuing chaos among Slav principalities and feudal lords viying for power, Bosnia's nobles hurriedly inscribed a territorial defense plan, circumscribing a region that stretched from central Bosnia to the Drina** (429 Kamakamova). This territory became known as the ***Banate of Bosnia*** and was a clear self-declaration of Bosnian polity (430 Fine), the assertion of the Bosnian state as a political entity.

Christianity Divided

The Mehmed Paša Sokolović bridge spans the Drina River at the Bosnian town of Višegrad. There is a well-known lore in the region that Christianity divided into eastern and western patriarchies across the Drina River. The bridge at Višegrad was commissioned in 1577 CE by Mehmed Paša Sokolović, then Vizier of Ottoman-ruled Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was designed by famed Ottoman architect and civil engineer Mimar Sinan, who also influenced his student, Mimar Hajrudin, the architect of the Stari Most across the Neretva River in the town of Mostar in Herzegovina. Sinan is best known for the elaborate and enduring architecture of the Suleymaniye Mosque in Istanbul, Turkey. The symbolism of the Mehmed Paša bridge is interpreted differently by scholars and folk tales on either side of the Drina, with some interpretation of each of the eleven arches straddling the span across the river representing a century of unified Christiandom until 1054 CE.

As both Western and Eastern European powers contested for authority and control over territory and people, their respective churches deepened the mutual distrust that began at least half a millennium ago in the 5th century CE (431 Cross, 432 Bayer, 433 Granfield) according to some scholars, even earlier in the 2nd or 3rd centuries CE (434 Kling, 435 Cleenewerck, 436 Haight) according to others.

During the expansion of the Christian church, five patriarchates dominated in political and theological eminence (437 Binns)—Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem (438 Britannica). After the seat of the Roman Empire was moved to Constantinople, Rome became estranged while Constantinople was promoted in importance (439 Britannica, 440 Randall).

With the dawn and rapid spread of Islam in the 7th century CE, Alexandria, Antioch and Jersualem became battlegrounds where Christian theology was challenged and supplanted by Islam. Islam's strict monotheism raised doubts about the directional changes that were mandated by Christian church synods and councils (441 Anastos), such as Nicaea (325 CE), Constantinople (381 CE), and Chalcedon (451 CE). In contrast, Rome became insulated from the debate, achieving a sense of calmness that allowed the Bishops of Rome to consolidate power and leverage Rome's military might to serve the church's ecumenical purposes.

Disunion between the empire's dominant halves led to disunion in the church (442 Binns). The disunity created a barrier to linguistic diversity within the combined Christian church structures. Greek liturgy dominated the Eastern churches, while Latin dominated Western churches (440 Randall). When combined with the political divide of the empire already well underway, strained communications in the church led to a deeper linguistic and cultural divide. As the divide became wider, the churches developed different rites and approaches to religious doctrine and interpretation.

With Slavonic speaking populations pressuring for liturgy in the Slavonic dialect, such as Christian churches in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Rome felt compelled to exercise its position of canonical authority and supremacy. Bosnia and Herzegovina's use of Bosnian Slavonic liturgy was perceived as an illegitimate innovation that was prohibited by Roman canonical law. With the loyalty of the Balkans at stake, Rome's claims to jurisdiction and papal authority became increasingly challenged by Constantinople (443 Hartmann) which claimed that the Council of Chalcedon declared the equality of the Bishops of Rome and Constantinople. Therefore, the Eastern church argued that Rome could not be superior or hold superior authority.

Rome, on the other hand, had developed an independence from the Eastern church and Empire. Because of its distance, it was sometimes perceived by the Eastern patriarchates as "neutral" in matters of theology or regional disputes on theological matters. By arbitrating in regional disputes and conflicts, Rome claimed superior authority.

The final separation between the churches was memorialized in 1054 CE through mutual excommunications issued by the Patriarch of Constantinople, Michael I Cerularius, and Pope Leo IX of Rome (444 Great). As the schism deepened, the Christians of Bosnia and Herzegovina found themselves wedged between two powerful churches contesting for dominance and conversion.

DUKLIJA & THE POPE

The uncertainty that ensued after the death of the Slavic ruler, Časlav, threw the region into a chaotic land grab for more than a century. Časlav had brought the Slavs into a rough form of unity. However, with each Slav oligarch contending for superiority, and the ongoing contest between Rome and Constantinople, the more powerful Byzantine emerged as decisive victors in the region, where they would rule badly for the next century.

Between 1051 and 1072 CE, the leader of Duklija, Mihajlo Vojislavljević, had pledged allegiance to Byzantine rule; however, by 1072 CE, he plotted with the Bulgars to revolt against his Byzantine masters. The revolt was crushed shortly after it began, and Mihajlo's son Constantine Bodin was captured by the Byzantine. Mihajlo negotiated his son's freedom and sent him to live with the Bulgars. Bodin was crowned King of the Bulgars and given the title Peter III.

In 1081, Mihajlo died and Bodin became King of Duklija. Bodin immediately restarted plans for revolt. This time, he solicited and acquired the assistance of the Normans, who had previously been run out by the Byzantine. The Byzantine would not stand for such a move, so they invaded Duklija and captured Bodin, again (445 Stanojević).

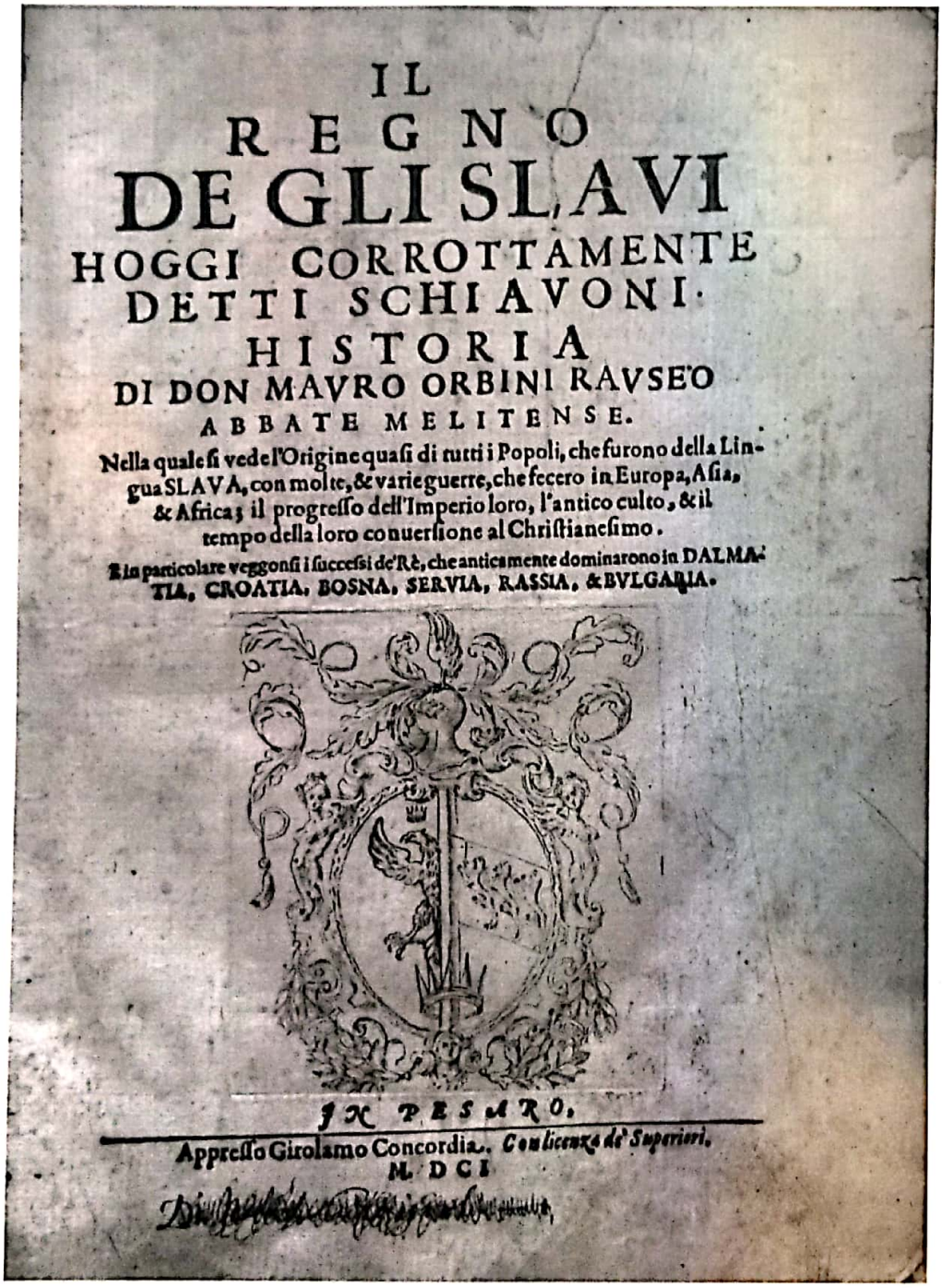
A brief time later, Bodin was freed, but due to repeated failures, he began fading as a unifying leader. Bodin then set eyes on Travunje where he still had some influence among the Slavs living there. In the mean time, *župan* (Count) Vukan of Raška became the dominant leader among Slavs.

To regain his position and power, Bodin formed an alliance in 1089 CE with the Roman Pope Urban II (446 Fine). The alliance gave Bodin some authority over the district as the Pope elevated the Bishop of Duklija to the rank of Archbishop for the entire region. That meant that all ecclesiastical matters in the district would now have to come under the purview of the Archbishop of Duklija, who was loyal to and governed by Bodin. In return, the alliance gave the Pope, and the Roman church, access to the coastal areas of the region. The inland areas remained under Constantinople (446 Fine).

This division along the coastal and inland regions of Duklija, Raška, Travunje, and Zahumlije can be described as a nascent challenge between the two *sees* of Christianity in the Roman Empire.

Soon after the alliance with the Pope, Bodin met with Crusaders led by Raymond IV, Count of Toulouse (also known as Raymond of Tripoli) and the army of Provençals. Bodin tried to convince the Provençals to attack inland, to help him seize Zahumlije and Travunje. However, Raymond was constrained by Crusade missions in Tripoli and Antioch (447 Edgington). Without priority or justification, the Crusades against Bosnia and Herzegovina would have to wait for another time (448 Fine).

Titular Vassals



IL
REGNO
DE GLI SLAVI
HOGGI CORROTTAMENTE
DETTI SCHIAVONI.
HISTORIA
DI DON MAVRO ORBINI RAVSEO
ABBATE MELITENSE.

Nella quale si vede l'Origine quasi di tutti i Popoli, che furono della Lingua SLAVA, con molte, & varie guerre, che fecero in Europa, Asia, & Africa; il progresso dell'Imperio loro, l'antico culto, & il tempo della loro conuersione al Christianesimo.

Et in particolare veggonsi i successi de' Rè, che anticamente dominarono in DALMATIA, CROATIA, BOSNA, SERVIA, RASSIA, & BVLGARIA.

IN PESARO,
Appresso Girolamo Concordia. Con licenza de' Superiori.
M. D C I

Cover of the first edition of "Regno de gli Slavi", written by Mavro Orbini in 1604 CE.

By the beginning of the 11th century CE, Bosnia formed as a self-governing political entity with its own nobility who called themselves "Bosnian" (449 Fine) or *Bošnjaci* (plural of the more recent *Bošnjak*). While still under the marginal rule of the Byzantine, Bosnia and its surrounding

territories saw opportunities for greater autonomy as the Byzantine faced separate challenges by the Seljuks and the Bulgars.

In 1072 CE, the son of Mihajlo Vojislavljević of Duklja, Constantine Bodin was sent to Bulgaria to aid in their revolt against the Byzantine. Constantine Bodin was crowned Bulgarian Tsar and given the title Peter III (450 Zlatarski). However, his revolt against the Byzantine failed.

Some historians argue incorrectly that Constantine Bodin of Duklja placed Duke Stephen as ruler of Bosnia (451 Klaić, 452 Mrgić). They also speculate that after Bodin's death, his newphew, Vukan of Raška, supported Stephen as Duke of Bosnia. However, they overlook that both Bodin and Vukan had a common practice to assign titles to their vassals and relatives without ever actually having authority or control over the territory to which they were granting title. Moreover, after Bodin's death, his cousin Kočapar Branislavljević tried to take over Duklija (449 Fine). This upset Vukan, who sent a death squad to the city of Doklea, where Kočapar established his seat.

To escape the assissanation, Kočapar fled to Bosnia, where he found refuge. He later married the daughter of the Bosnian Ban Stephen. If Vukan's vassal, Stephen, had any influence or control in Bosnia, he surely would have tried to capture Kočapar, in obyance of Vukan's order. Stephen certainly would not allow Kočapar to marry his daughter. Additionally, Kočapar moved to Zahumlije where he died in battle defending his country of refuge (453 Stephenson, 454 Živković). In fact, Kočapar gained fame in Bosnia and Zahumlije, so if Stephen had any influence in the territory, locating the whereabouts of Kočapar would not have been difficult. Because Stephen could not locate Kočapar, it is clear that he did not have the degree of support from Vukan that is claimed by many historians.

To understand this period from Bosnia's past, historians have relied on a document known as *Ljetopis popa Dukljanina*, or The Chronicle of the Priest of Duklija, written by an anonymous author, presumed to be a priest. The only evidence of this document is a copy that is believed to have been created in the 17th century CE. Some historians claim the copy is from the 12th century CE, where perhaps Bishop Gregory is said to have added commentary. Others claim the copy is from the 15th century CE. Nonetheless, all of them know full well that the document has novel-like narratives that tell fictional and mythological tales of Slavs and their "glorious conquests" on the journey to the region (455 Fine). As such, the document must be reviewed with a critical eye, and its claims must be reconciled with known facts, motivations of the various persona, and common sense.

Bosnia and Herzegovina's rulers in the 12th century CE have not yet been fully understood. What we know is that Hungary tried to install its own Bans there, such as Ban Borić, who was sent there as Governor from Hungarian King Géza II (456 Ćorović, 457 Fine), not as ruler. **By 1167 CE, Bosnia returned to Byzantine rule, as the Hungarians were defeated in the Battle of Sirmium** (458 Treadgold).

Bosnia's Medieval Rulers

Title	House	Reign	Suzerainty
Ban Borić	Borićević	1154-1163	Hungary
Ban Kulin	Kulinić	1180-1204	Byzantine/Hungary
Ban Stjepan (Stephen)	Kulinić	1204-1232	Hungary
Ban Matej Ninoslav	Radivoj	1232-1253	Hungary/Autonomous
Ban Prijezda I	Kotromanić	1254-1287	Autonomous
Ban Prijezda II	Kotromanić	1287-1290	Autonomous
Ban Stephen I	Kotromanić	1287-1290	Joint regin with Prijezda I
Ban Stephen I	Kotromanić	1290-1314	Hungary

In 1299, Paul I Šubić of Bribir assigned himself the title Bosniae dominus, or Lord of Bosnia and named his brother Mladen I Šubić as Ban. Mladen was at war with Stephen I of Bosnia from 1299 to 1304.

In 1305, Paul I Šubić expanded his title to "totius Bosniae dominus" and declared himself Lord of all of Bosnia from 1305–1312.

Ban Paul Šubić	Šubić	1305-1312	Autonomous
Ban Mladen II	Šubić	1312-1322	Autonomous
Ban Stephen II	Kotromanić	1322-1353	Autonomous
Ban Tvrtko I	Kotromanić	1353-1366	Autonomous
Ban Vuk	Kotromanić	1366-1367	Autonomous
Ban Tvrtko I (2nd regin)	Kotromanić	1367-1377	Autonomous

After half a century of relatively autonomous rule, Bosnia was declared a Kingdom by King Tvrtko I of the Kotromanić house.

King Tvrtko I	Kotromanić	1377-1391	Kingdom of Bosnia
King Dabiša	Kotromanić	1391-1395	Kingdom of Bosnia
Queen Jelena Gruba	Nikolić	1395-1398	Kingdom of Bosnia
King Ostoja	Kotromanić	1398-1404	Kingdom of Bosnia
King Tvrtko II	Kotromanić	1404-1409	Kingdom of Bosnia
King Ostoja	Kotromanić	1409-1418	Hungary
Stephen Ostojić	Kotromanić	1418-1421	Kingdom of Bosnia
Tvrtko II	Kotromanić	1421-1432	Kingdom of Bosnia
Radivoj	Kotromanić	1432-1435	Autonomous
Tvrtko II	Kotromanić	1435-1443	Kingdom of Bosnia
Thomas	Kotromanić	1443-1461	Kingdom of Bosnia
Stephen Tomašević	Kotromanić	1461-1463	Kingdom of Bosnia

Kulin Ban

Ban Kulin expanded the Banate of Bosnia, established a level of autonomy for the principality, and brought stability to the region.

In 1180 CE, a native Bosnian of the Kulinić house, Ban Kulin, became head of state, bringing peace to Bosnia and Herzegovina (459 Malcolm, 460 Fine). Ban Kulin began his mission in 1163 CE as he tried to insulate the state from the power struggle between Hungary and the Byzantine. At the peak of his reign, he brought Bosnia to peace and ensured its autonomy (461 Britannica) in the presence of the more powerful Hungarians and Byzantine. Ban Kulin established trade with neighboring Ragusa (Dubrovnik) (462 Mahmutćehajić), ensuring Bosnia's prosperity. He enacted autonomous economic policies and extended the protection of the state over religious sects, establishing some of the earliest practices in Europe guaranteeing individual freedom to choose and practice faith.

Kulin Ban's rule projected a new proposition for Europe—one where the diverse sects of Christianity could coexist. By extending the protection of the state to the Bosnian Christian church, Ban Kulin made the Banate of Bosnia the epicenter of religious tolerance in Europe. **In the 12th century CE, Ban Kulin forged a vision of statehood for his nation that Europe aspires yet to become—protective of religious diversity.**

Ban Kulin began his reign under Byzantine Emperor Manuel I Komnenos (458 Treadgold), who tried to invade Hungary to bring it into the fold of the Byzantine Empire (463 Imamović). Komnenos succeeded in temporarily conquering Hungary. When Komnenos died in 1180 CE, Ban Kulin quickly asserted the independence of the Bosnian state (464 Stanojević). **With this assertion, Bosnia was established as an autonomous state** (465 Britannica), **which Ban Kulin ruled exclusively to the benefit of its citizens.** Under Ban Kulin's rule, Bosnia enjoyed an age of peace and prosperity (466 Malcolm) that is memorialized in the Bosnian saying: *"Od kulina Bana i dobrijeh dana,"* an expression that reminisces about the time "From Kulin Ban and the good [old] days." Concurrent with Bosnia's autonomy, Ban Kulin's brother-in-law's brother, Prince Stefan Nemanja, claimed independence for Serbia (445 Stanojević) and negotiated a mutual-defense alliance with Bosnia.

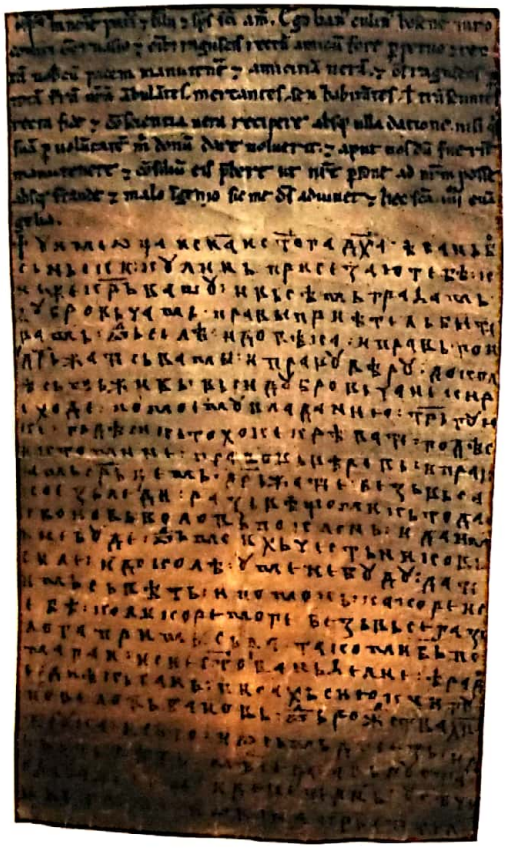
War Against Byzantium

Within three years of independent rule, Kulin Ban was forced to defend the Bosnian state against the emerging menace of the new Byzantine emperor, Andronikos I Komnenos. Andronikos had sided with Manuel in the battle to bring Hungary into the Byzantine Empire. However, Andronikos was not seen by Manuel as the natural successor to the throne. Manuel, whose mother was of Hungarian descent (467 Browning), had envisioned that future King Béla III of Hungary would succeed him. Manuel brought Béla, when he was an adolescent, to Constantinople in 1163 CE, where he renamed him Alexios and bestowed upon him the title of ***despotes***, or heir apparent to the throne (468 Makk, 469 Stephenson). Andronikos refused to pledge allegiance to the new *despotes*. When Manuel's wife, Maria, had a child of her own, Manuel demoted Béla-Alexios to ***kaisar***, a lesser title with landlordship but no possibility of succession to the throne. Bela-Alexios returned to Hungary. Manuel and Maria's newborn heir was named Alexios II. Andronikos was sent to Antioch.

In 1182 CE, two years after Manuel died, the Empire was being run by proxy of Alexios II through his mother. Seeing the vulnerability in leadership, Andronikos marched to Constantinople, where his forces began a massacre of the city's Latin inhabitants and non-Greek nobles (470 Chisholm) who had supported Maria and Alexios II. Andronikos accused the Latins and non-Greeks of controlling the economy and being unjust. He imprisoned Empress Maria and deceived Alexios II to sign a directive ordering her death (471 Gibbon, 472 Choniatēs). He coerced the thirteen-year-old Alexios II to publicly acknowledge him as an equal, only to have him killed afterwards (473 Harris). By the year 1183 CE, the sixty-five-year-old Andronikos had taken control of the Empire and forced Alexios II's even younger bride, twelve-year-old Agnes of France (470 Chisholm), daughter of France's King Louis VII, into marriage (471 Gibbon, 474 Choniatēs). Andronikos quickly developed a reputation for his ruthless tactics, disdain for rival nobility, and brutal violence (470 Chisholm). He turned the Byzantine Empire into a state that unleashed terror and brought chaos to the region (475 Harris) and instability to neighboring principalities.

By 1183 CE, Kulin Ban allied with Stefan Nemanja and King Béla III of Hungary (Béla-Alexios) to attack the Byzantine. Serbia and Bosnia were menaced by Andronikos' rage and chaotic attack squads. By 1185 CE, the allied forces of Bosnia, Hungary, and Serbia successfully pushed the Byzantine Imperial Army (476 Makk) out of the Morava Valley, securing Belgrade, Barancs (Braničevo), Niš, and Sofia (modern-day Bulgaria). Ban Kulin's forces cleared the Byzantine out from Ravno (Trebinje). Hungary controlled Dalmatia, Zadar, Istria, and parts of Croatia and Sirmium (a part of Serbia). Nemanja controlled the parts of Serbia that neither the Hungarians nor Byzantine controlled. Ban Kulin controlled Bosnia and Zahumlije, and later accepted the suzerainty of Hungary (477 Treadgold).

Charter of Kulin Ban



A copy of the Charter of Kulin Ban, written on August 29, 1189 CE, is considered the first diplomatic document written in the Bosnian Glagolitic script, Bosančica. At least three copies were created at or near the time of the original document. The language of the charter is a form of the original Bosnian dialect before it was influenced by the Old Slavonic Church. Historians believe the copies were created by an artisan calligraphist from Dubrovnik, then Ragusa, who had been trained in Bosnia.

In 1189 CE, Kulin Ban negotiated a trade agreement, known as the *Povelja Kulina bana*, or Charter of Kulin Ban, with the neighboring Republic of Ragusa, establishing many principles that thrust Bosnia well ahead of its contemporary European neighbors in terms of economic and social policy and influence.

The agreement opened Bosnia as a market for trade with the better-connected Rugasans. It proposed an economic benefit for the tax-free trade of goods and materials through the territory. This economy was juxtaposed to the dark economy of human or slave trading. Up to that point, humans had been enslaved and transferred by Romans and other seafaring traders, through Bosnia to the Adriatic coast, where they were traded onto vessels in the Adriatic Sea. Kulin's economic model of goods and materials provided an emerging possible alternative to the slave trade.

With the charter, Kulin Ban implicitly proclaimed a common language and written form based on the *Glagolitic* script, *Bosančica*. Some historians erroneously call the script Bosnian Cyrillic. *Bosančica* served as a catalyst for a paradigm shift in commerce, government and religious practice. By formalizing a script that was effective in reproducing Bosnian Slavonic phonology, Kulin single-handedly catalyzed the documentation of public agreements. *Bosančica* became the basis of memorializing governance in public offices. And finally, it extended a consistent liturgy that was sanctioned by the domestic Bosnian church. The script advanced Bosnia's influence in the region, and brought literacy to masses in Bosnia's neighboring areas, such as Dalmatia and Istria, among others. By writing the charter in *Bosančica*, and Latin (478 Turbić-Hadžagić), and by invoking the *Trinity* in the preamble, Kulin ensured its purpose as a source of pride (462 Mahmutćehajić) within his realm and acceptance by Catholic Ragusans.

Tablet of Ban Kulin dates to 1203-1204 CE, slightly before or at the time that Ban Kulin died. The tablet was discovered at an ancient cemetery (at Muhašinović) on the left bank of the Bosna River in Biskupići near the town of Visoko. The tablet is engraved with crosses and other markings. There is also an inscription that attests to a Catholic church that Ban Kulin built, and a call for God to bless the Ban and Vojslav, his wife.

Kulin Ban's Legacy

Ban Kulin ruled Bosnia for twenty-four years, but his legacy continued well past his period of rule and even past his lifetime. The modern-day state of Bosnia and Herzegovina has its roots of independence entrenched in the various assertions of autonomy that Ban Kulin endorsed in the 12th century CE. Europe owes Ban Kulin a debt of gratitude for protecting religious diversity among early Christians, especially against waves of Catholic intolerance of protestants. Ban Kulin also offered a viable alternative economic model that focused on the commerce of goods and materials as opposed to human trafficking. While Ban Kulin didn't stop the slave trade, his charter to Ragusans offered economic alternatives to the profits some Ragusans were making from slave trade. The charter also ensured Bosnia's safety by tying it into economic prosperity for Ragusans.

Crusades

A 19th century reproduction from the Chronicum Pictum in Hungary's National Library depicting King Béla retreating from he Mongols' invasion of Hungary in 1241. Image from Széchényi National Library, Budapest.

In 1203 CE, Serbian Grand Prince Stefan Nemanja abdicated the Serbian throne in favor his younger son Stefan Nemanjić. However, upon Nemanja's death, Nemanjić's older brother Vukan Nemanjić of Duklja plotted to overthrow his younger brother. He found help from Hungarian King Emeric (Henry), who needed Serbia's help in fending off a growing threat from the Second Bulgarian Empire. Vukan overthrew Stefan and asked Pope Innocent III for a royal title (479 Ćirković). Stefan fled to Bulgaria, only to return a few years later to attack Serbia with the Bulgarian army. To lure Roman forces into the region, Serbian Prince Vukan Nemanjić accused Ban Kulin and the Bosnian church of heresy. In 1199 CE, he asked the Pope for a Crusade against the entire state (480 Lock).

Vukan reported to the Pope that Ban Kulin was a heretic and that he had welcomed other heretics from the Dalmatian coast. This upset Archbishop Bernard of Split since some of the accused heretics came through or from Split. In 1200 CE, the Pope wrote a letter to Hungarian King Emeric

advising that a group known as *Paterenes* from Split and Trogir in Dalmatia had taken refuge in Bosnia under Ban Kulin's watchful eye and with his approval. *Paterenes* were dualists like *Cathars*, who lived mostly in the Balkans. Some scholars place *Paterenes* only in Bosnia (481 Runciman).

Ban Kulin attempted to avert the potentially grave consequences of the accusation by replying to the Pope, explaining that he did not regard the migrants as heretics, but as Catholics. He offered to send some of them to Rome, so their faith could be confirmed. He also invited Papal representatives to visit Bosnia to verify for themselves that Catholics were not being mistreated.

Pope Innocent III sent *legates* (Papal representatives) that included Ivan de Kazamaris (Johannes Casamaris), who interrogated Ban Kulin and the Bosnian clergy. In 1202 CE, the Pope wrote to Archbishop Bernard explaining that heresy had reached Bosnia. He characterized the heresy as "*Cathar*" in nature. The *Cathars* believed in two principles of god, that one is good, and the other is evil. The *Cathars* were mostly ascetic in that they did not retain material wealth, except for their own homes (481 Kaelber). These widespread dualist movements caused concern in Rome.

Bosnia's Krstjani

Ban Kulin extended the protection of the state over churches and religious institutions in his realm, including Orthodox, Catholic and Bogomili, alongside pagan and other faiths. Within the Bogomil classification, there were a few Christian sects including some that followed Bogomil the Priest closely and others who followed Christian theology like Bogomil's but not under the extension of the Bogomil church. The Christians who were not Catholic or Orthodox were classified as "krstjani" (Christians). In later times, Bosnians became known as "dobri Bošnjani," good Bosnians. Due to its protected status the Bosnian church attracted dualists from the region, who took refuge in Bosnia's relative isolation.

The Pope's representative, legate de Kazamaris, demanded an *abjuration* (a solemn, sworn repudiation or renunciation of non-Catholic beliefs and practices) by Ban Kulin and the Bosnian clergy. At a place known as *Bilino Polje* near the town of Visoko, Ban Kulin complied and signed a statement attesting to his "Catholicism." Bosnia's leading clergy members also co-signed with their ruler. The clergy included several prominent Bogomil priests who were forced by the situation to declare themselves as Catholics. The impending attack by Crusaders was averted.

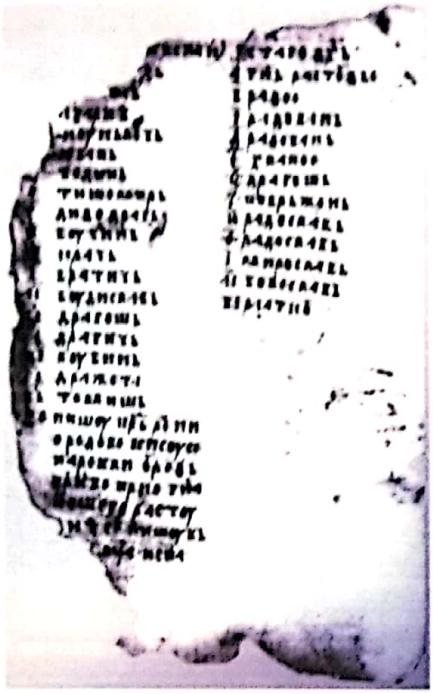
Upon Ban Kulin's death, his son Ban Stjepan (Stephen) Kulinić took the reigns of the kingdom from 1204 to 1232 CE. Unlike his father, Stjepan was a staunch Catholic who had to support the religious fervor of Hungary's Catholic king to keep his seat. Stjepan's tendencies to encourage the persecution of non-Catholics and dependency on Hungary made him unpopular in Bosnia, especially among non-Catholic Christians, Bogomil priests, peasants and Bogomil's followers. In retaliation for their disapproval, Stjepan stepped-up persecution of Bosnia's non-Catholics and others who did not accept the authority of the Roman Catholic ecclesiastical order.

Unable to control the domestic Bosnian (mostly Bogomil) church and its zealot followers, Ban Stjepan asked Roman Catholic Pope Honorius III in 1221 CE to determine the state of "Christianity" in Bosnia. This was seen by Bosnia's masses as a clear betrayal. Ban Stjepan exploited the Pope's frustration with French Cathars and other dualist sects that threatened Rome's view of Christian theology. He also played on the similarities between Bogomil asceticism and that of the Cathars, alongside both groups' defiance of the Roman church to fan the flames on the Pope's suspicions that the Bogomili were Paterenes or Cathar dualists. The Pope's emissary, legate Aconcius, reported back to the Pope that Bosnia was overrun by Bogomili and that Christendom was at risk (480 Lock).

The Pope demanded Hungarian King Andrew II and the Bishoprics to eradicate Bosnia's Bogomil through a Crusade. Andrew was occupied with internal struggles, so he could not send a force. The Crusade, nonetheless, picked up momentum when the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Kaločki (the town of Kalocsa in Bács-Kiskun county, Hungary) offered to lead it in exchange for Bosnia coming under his ecclesiastical authority. In 1225 CE, the Archbishop colluded with one of the rulers of Srem (Vojvodina), likely a man named Giletus, to conduct a joint Crusade against Bosnia. The attacks resulted in gains in Usora and Soli (Tuzla) for the Crusaders, but losses in Vrhbosna (in modern-day Sarajevo) (483 Fine).

Because of the betrayal, Ban Stjepan was deposed by Bosnia's Bogomili in 1232 CE. The Bosnian throne was seized by Matej Ninoslav, who was previously a supporter of Hungary and a nominal Catholic that Rome felt it could rely on to oppose the Bogomil. However, when Ninoslav saw the opportunity to sieze power, he sided with the Bogomili at the expense of his relations with Serbia and the Catholic church. Ninoslav served as a Hungarian vassal but waned in his support for Catholic ecclesiastical domination (484 Fine). Ninoslav's reprieve on persecution of the Bosnian church gave Bosnia's non-Catholic Christians some breathing room to regroup and strengthen their reserves.

In 1233 CE, Pope Gregory IX replaced Bosnia's Bishop with Johannes Wildeshausen, a German of the Dominican Order. Due to Bosnia's masses rejecting Wildeshausen, the frequency of Rome's emissaries increased to the point that on October 17, 1234 CE, the Pope called for a Crusade against Bosnia. **The Pope classified this Crusade "more important than the Crusades in the Holy Land."** Emboldened by the Pope's call, King Andrew II of Hungary stripped Ninoslav's title and endowed it upon his son, Herzeg Coloman (Koloman) of Galicia. At the same time, the son of Ban Stjepan, Prince Sibislav, who had settled in Usora, began incursions into Ninoslav's territory. Sibislav's goal was to reinstate the House of Kulinić. Coloman amassed a large army of Hungarians and the Crusades against Bosnia resumed, this time with Ninoslav running for refuge in Ragusa (Dubrovnik). The Crusade lasted five years with heavy losses on all sides in western regions and Hum. However, the Crusaders could not penetrate central Bosnia and the Bosnians never capitulated.



Handwritten manuscript known as the Gospel of Batalovo from the 14th century. This page lists the superiors of the Church of Bosnia. Image from Kuna Herta's book "Srednjovjekovna bosanska književnost."

In 1241 CE, under the rule of Batu Khan, the Tatars invaded Hungary. Coloman was recalled to defend the homeland where he was killed in a campaign launched by the Tatars. However, with the help of the Croats, the Hungarians were able to repel the Tatars and regain authority over their kingdom. Ninoslav was able to restore control over Bosnia, but eventually, King Bela IV asserted Hungarian rule over the territory and appointed Ninoslav's Catholic cousin, Prijezda, to the Bosnian throne.

Subsequent Crusades were undertaken against Bosnia beginning with Pope Innocent IV, who called on Hungarians to "defend Bosnia against heretics" in 1246 and 1247 CE. Having some victories against their own invaders, the Hungarians were willing to extend their military momentum into Bosnia. However, Matthew Ninoslav intervened and convinced the Pope that a Crusade against Bosnia would be a bad idea. In 1248 CE, the Pope suspended the Crusade.

In 1337 and 1338 CE, Pope Benedict XII called across central Europe for Crusades in Bosnia, to rid the nation of its Kotromanić rulers once and for all. At the time, Bosnia was supported by the Capetian Angevins dynasty established in Hungary. The Pope saw the support as the beginning of an unholy alliance that could upset Rome's dominance.

In 1367 CE, Pope Urban V, reacted to anti-Hungarian sentiment in Bosnia and called on private Hungarian citizens and other Christians to flock to a Crusade to ensure that relations established between Bosnia's Ban Stephen II Kotromanić and King Charles Robert of Hungary and Croatia would not emerge as an alliance that could threaten Catholicism or the power and ultimate authority of the Roman church. At the behest of ousted Bosnian Ban Vuk Kotromanić, the Pope acted hastily and supported an overthrow of Ban Tvrtko I, who had come back to rule after Vuk floundered in authority. With his second ascension as Ban, Tvrtko integrated Zahumlija into the kingdom by the second half of 1367 CE. **As Bosnia's Bans resisted their overlords, Hungarian pressure increased, underming local leadership and authority. The pressure led to dissention and collapse of the Bosnian monarchy to the point that Bosnian masses refused to protect their leaders.**

The Bosnian church continued well into the 14th century CE when it was absorbed into an incoming Ottoman ecclesiastical hierarchy. Up to that point, and for the duration of its existence, the Bosnian church continually came under physical and ecclesiastical attack by Rome.

Hrvoje Vukčić Hrvatinić

Image of nobleman Hrvoj Hrvatinić from Hrvoj's missal.

As the Hungarians struggled against the Mongols, the Croatian city of Zagreb was sacked in 1242 CE. Shortly after that, the Venetians vied for control of Dalmatia and its coastal cities. Internal warfare among Croat nobility began, resulting in powerful nobles rising to and falling from power. The first of these nobles to rise was Paul I Šubić of Bribir (485 Klaić). Šubić was followed by Hrvoje Vukčić Hrvatinić, from a noble family that had settled in Bosnia and Herzegovina and later served nobles who would rule Dalmatia and Slavonia as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary and the Ottoman Empire.

Hrvatinić was one of the most influential members of the region's nobility. He held feudal titles, including Duke of Donji Kraljevi and Grand Duke of Bosnia, which persisted over the reign of three native Bosnian kings: Stjepan Tvrtko I, Stephen Dabiša, and Stephen Ostoja. In 1380 CE, Bosnian King Stjepan (Stephen) Tvrtko I called on Hrvatinić to take the seat of Lašva in his royal court.

Walled fortress in the Bosnian town of Jajce built by Hrvoje Vukčić Hrvatinić. The fortress was begun in the 13th century and completed under Hrvatinic in the 14th century. It was later expanded by subsequent rulers. The fort and city became the city of Bosnian rulers. Photo © 2018 Irfan Mirza.

By 1387 CE, Hrvatinić was made Grand Duke and requested to lead Bosnian troops to break the blockade of Zagreb, where Bishop Ivan Horvat was under siege (486 Engel, 484 Fine). In 1389, Hrvatinić opposed King Sigismund of Hungary, defeating the Hungarian invasion of Bosnia before they could reach the city of Vrbas (485 Klaić). Under Hrvatinić's leadership, Bosnian forces pushed Sigismund's army across the Una River, capturing their stronghold at Hrvatska Dubica. Defeat by Hrvatinić weakened Sigismund's grip on the Hungarian throne, paving the way for Ladislaus of Naples to take reign of the Hungarian realm (487 Ančić).

In 1391 CE, when Bosnian King Tvrtko I suddenly passed away, Hrvatinić supported the rise of Tvrtko's former opponent Stephen Dabiša, who was elected head by the Bosnian *Stanak* or *Rusag*, the state's assembly of governing nobles (488 Šišić). King Dabiša took over Tvrtko's realm, which included all of Bosnia, Croatia, Dalmatia, Zahumlija, and Rascia (Old Raška). When the Ottomans attacked in 1392 CE, Hrvatinić rallied his forces to support Dabiša, setting back Ottoman advances in Bosnia.

Hrvatinić saw the imminent advance of the Ottomans, who had just turned Slav Lord Stefan Lazarević into their vassal, and prior to that defeated his father Prince Lazar Hrebeljanović in the Battle of *Kosovo polje* (field) in 1389 CE. Fighting alongside Prince Lazar in Kosovo were forces sent by Bosnian King Tvrtko I under the command of Vlatko Vuković (1389 Fine).

After Dabiša's widow, Queen Jelena Gruba, took over as Bosnia's head of state, Hrvatinić created an alliance with the Ottomans to oppose her. By 1398, Hrvatinić succeeded in replacing Jelena with Stephen Ostoja as the new King of Bosnia.

Hrvatinić's campaigns were so successful that in 1403 CE, King Ladislaus made him Hungary's Viceroy to Croatia and Dalmatia, earning him title as Herzog (Duke) of Split (1408 Šišić), with control of the Adriatic islands of Brač, Hvar and Korčula, in addition to carrying the titles of Duke of Bosnia and Prince of Donji Krajlevi.

Croat scholars downplay Hrvatinić's role in the unification of Dalmatia and Slavonia, otherwise they would have to acknowledge that it took a Bosnian, to unite Croatia. Hrvatinić is the only Bosnian to rule all of Croatia.

Hrvoj's missal (above left) and Hvalov missal (above right) are counted amongst Bosnia and Herzegovina's most valuable historical artifacts.

Under the rule of Hrvatinić, Dalmatians gained the Glagolitic script that was developed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, known as *Bosančica*. When Hrvatinić was made Duke of Split, two manuscripts were developed in his honor. With an introduction written in *Bosančica*, one manuscript is written in Cyrillic and is known as *Hvalov missal*. The other, written entirely in *Bosančica*, is known as *Hrvojov missal*. Both artifacts have become invaluable historical artifacts attesting to the influence of Bosnian Christians in the liturgy of the region. A *missal* is a hymnal or prayer book. Croat scholars prefer to describe the script as Croatian Glagolitic, but outside of Croatia, the script's origins in Bosnia and Herzegovina are undisputed.

Hrvatinić introduced social and political reforms in Croatia, bringing together Slavs and non-Slavs. He insisted on liturgies in both Bosnian Slavonic and Latin. He appointed members of his council from all denominations to ensure diversity in his court. He invested in Croatia in terms of infrastructure and improved conditions for the working classes. He actively pursued the development of a middle class, extending education beyond the elite. Under Hrvatinic's leadership, the trafficking of Bosnian slaves along the Adriatic coast declined.

Ottoman Empire

Depiction of a Turkic hunting party with Sultan Ahmed III of the Ottoman dynasty from 1703 CE to 1730 CE, painted by Jean Baptiste Vanmour in the 18th century CE.

The last Ottoman Caliphate grew the territory under its control, which encouraged nomadic Turkic tribes to settle in protected areas around Edirne (Adrianople). However, the growing Turkic population and military presence of the Ottomans posed a threat to neighboring Christian strongholds. With the Ottoman occupation of Edirne, the major throughfare between Christian Constantinople and the rest of Europe had been cut off by the Ottomans. In 1364 CE, in an attempt to curb Turk settlements from growing, Edirne came under attack by a European force that was comprised of Serbians, Hungarians, Wallachians and other European soldiers, who were supported by Crusaders on order of Pope Urban V. Altogether, the invading force numbered between 20,000 and 60,000 Crusaders and Serbs. The invading forces were surprised by a smaller, but superior Ottoman reconnaissance force, which defeated the invaders at their encampment along the Maritsa River (490 Stavrianos).

Serb incursions into Ottoman territory didn't stop with the defeat at the Maritsa. In 1371 CE, to get revenge for the first battle at Maritsa, Serbian King Vukašin Mrnjavčević and his brother Despot Jovan Uglješa launched another raid along the Maritsa River.

Sipahi or light cavalery of the Ottoman army. Image: Rålamb Book of Costumes, by Swedish Ambassador Claes Rålamb.

This time the Serbian raid was near the Greek village of Chernomen. Vukašin had his sights set on the Albanian town of Shkodër, which was left to the protectorate of the Venitians to defend against possible Turk invasion. With the pressure of growing Turkic settlements and a distant Venetian force, Vukašin could not resist the idea of setting up a Serb stronghold so close to the Ottoman seat. An attack near Chernomen would allow military passage to Shkodër.

During the reign of Murad I, the Ottomans expanded their empire by bringing most of the Balkans under their rule. In 1389 CE, Murad I led his army as a pre-emptive strike into the fields of Kosovo Polje, where the Ottomans defeated the Serbian army of Prince Lazar Hrebeljanović. The Serbs had planned an invasion of Shkodër, a town in Albania that was the base of the Ottoman *Sanjaks* or principalities. The attacks were repelled by the Ottoman army. However, they also instigated sweeping reprisals by the Ottomans, who sent garrisons to quell the rebellion in Serbia.

With time and battlefield victories, the Ottoman Empire grew to be one of the most powerful states in the world between the 15th and 16th centuries CE. The Empire spanned a six-century period that ended in 1922. The central region of authority of the Empire was replaced by the Turkish Republic, and its holdings in southeastern Europe, the Balkans, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Greece, parts of Ukraine and Middle East, ceded to successor states (491 Shaw).

Feudal Principalities

Seat of the Bosnian Kingdom in Mili-Arnautovići, in the modern town of Visoko, near Sarajevo. Photo © 2017 Irfan Mirza.

By 1384 CE, the Ottomans began their conquest of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Bosnia had been suffering from decades of political and social instability, due to feudal infighting among its most powerful families. The Ottomans had already begun their conquest of parts of Serbia, Kosovo, and Skoplje (466 Malcolm). Eastern Bosnia was next.

The Ottoman Turks came to Bosnia first as trading merchants. They brought goods and fabric. They also introduced various mercantile concepts and established their own integrity among Bosnia's most influential families. The Ottomans' generosity earned cautious appreciation from the lower classes. The Ottomans were generally well-educated and carried Islamic knowledge and principles, as well as science and military strategy, peaking the curiosity of educated Bosnians. The Ottomans **used their knowledge to gain influence among Bosnians and Herzegovinians, in return providing intellectual stimulation to an otherwise closed society that was cut-off from the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the Christian church out of Rome.**

KOTROMANIĆ RULE

Coat of arms of the House of Kotromanić.

Between the 12th and 14th centuries, Bosnian history was dominated by power struggles between the Nemanjić, Šubić and Kotromanić families. Stefan Nemanja was a Slav from Sklavinia (Slavic lands) who tried to exert his power through military force, and ecclesiastical doctrine. Nemanja had established the Serbian Eastern Orthodox Church and appointed St. Sava to write the Church's *Nomocanon* (constitution). However, Nemanja's reign in Bosnia was overturned when he was betrayed by Prijezda I, a local vassal of the Hungarian empire. The next several decades saw the rise of a nobleman from within Bosnia, Stjepan Kotroman of the Kotromanić family, who ruled Bosnia jointly with Prijezda's son Prijezda II. To ensure stability, Prijezda II arranged for Kotroman to marry the Slav princess Elizabeth, daughter of Stefan Dragulje. Dragulje was the defacto *autocratic* ruler of the Slavs east of the Drina. When Prijezda II died, Kotroman consolidated his rule over Bosnia. However, he soon faced challenge by Paul Šubić, a nobleman of Croatian descent, who had married Dragulje's other daughter.

By the 14th century, Kotromanić rule had dominated, leading to the expansion of the Kingdom to include parts of Dalmatia and Herzegovina under the leadership of Kralj (King) Tvrtko from the town of Visoko.

Heretic Kingdom

A necropolis at Radimlja, where gravestones mark the massacre of Bosnia's Monophysite and dualist Christians during the Crusades. The site also contains gravestone markers from later Catholic and Orthodox martyrs. Photo © 2017 Irfan Mirza.

Prior to Christian and Islamic influences, Bosnians had diverse religious beliefs. A dominant dualist-sect of ascetics, likely migrants from Bulgaria, known as Bogomils, who rejected the hierarchy of both Roman and Eastern Christian churches, received protection by Ban Kulin. This prompted the Pope to deem the kingdom as 'heretic,' creating a religious schism. Pope Gregory IX issued a call for Crusades against Bosnia, and Hungary responded.

From 1234 to 1239 CE, the Crusades were being carried out in full force. The Crusades resulted in Bosnia's Bogomils who refused to convert, being slaughtered in masses. Bosnia's Kotromanić rulers eventually prevailed in stopping the massacres, but by that time, the Bogomils and their Bosnian defenders had suffered greatly. **The Mongol invasion of Hungary diverted the Church's military resources away from Bosnia and Herzegovina, allowing Bosnians and Herzegovinians to revert to their multi-religious society.**

The Roman church failed to understand that the Christians of Bosnia and Herzegovina had, in good faith, accepted the messages of the early Apostles, especially those that predated the Nicaene and Chalcedonian councils. **The church's declaration of "heresy" against the Christians of Bosnia and Herzegovina was tantamount to a declaration of heresy against the Apostles and emissaries who carried out Jesus' traditions well ahead of church decisions made at various synods.**

Rise of the Ottomans

Portrait made by descriptions of Sultan Gazi Uthman (Osman) Khan (Han) I, leader and founder of the Ottoman dynasty in 1299 CE. The dynasty reigned until 1922, shortly after the end of the First World War.

As Roman influence in Central and Eastern Europe waned, waves of culture, religion and military dominance began swelling at first on the outskirts of the Roman and Byzantine empires, and later into the very heart of Europe itself. Perhaps, the most intrusive and challenging of these incursions were from the Avar and Khazar Khaganates to the east of modern-day Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, and by pressures and influences from the Oguz tribes from present-day Khazakstan. The Avar and Khazar launched westbound attacks and incursions from the region of Bulgaria, while from the region of present-day Kzakhstan flowed the influence of the Oguz tribe, a Turkic people who formed a confederation of Turkic tribes that took over Anatolia after the fall of the Seljuks in the region.

The Oguz confederation became known for its founder Gazi Ataman Khan the First (also known as Uthman and Osman). Gazi Ataman became Sultan, or sovereign leader, of the empire and spawned a dynasty that ruled over parts of Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Asia for more than six centuries. Known as the Ottoman dynasty, the early confederation of the 13th century CE deposed the Byzantine Empire amid a centuries-long struggle between the West and East Roman and Byzantine powers and churches. Within half a century, the Ottomans marched into Bosnia and Herzegovina, where they ruled for the next 550 years.

Battle of Kosovo

16th century CE Russian miniature art depicting the Battle of Kosovo (from the Facial chronicle of Ivan IV.)

In 1389 CE, Sultan Murad I Hüdavendigâr launched an all out attack against Serb attacks and infiltrations into Ottoman territory. He led an army against Serbian Prince Lazar Hrebeljanović, who led his own forces alongside forces of Serb nobleman Vuk Branković, who was able to convince Bosnian King Tvrtko I to support his forces. King Tvrtko sent commander Vlatko Vuković and a small contingent of Bosnian fighters. Tvrtko provided the force as an advanced guard with the intention of showing force to deter the Ottomans from setting their sights on further advancement into Bosnia and its allies' territories.

Both Ottoman and Serb armies suffered immeasurable losses, but the Ottomans prevailed, eradicating the Serb army. A consequence of the loss was that Serb principalities were left indefensible, and the Ottomans leveraged the masses' dissatisfaction with Serb leadership to come under Ottoman vassalage.

SULTAN MEHMED FATIH

Portrait of Sultan Mehmed Fatih, also known as Mehmet the Conqueror. Painting by İtalian artist Gentile Bellini, c. 1480.

Sultan Mehmed Fatih, also known as Mehmed II, inherited the leadership of the Osman family dynasty in 1313 CE. He ruled briefly and was deposed, only to later return to leadership in 1356 CE. During his second term, he launched campaigns to expand the reach of the dynasty including the conquer of Constantinople, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mehmed's political savvy alongside his military conquests expanded the Ottoman Empire into the heart of Europe and created multi-cultural opportunities and impressions that Europe continues to respond to even today.

Ottoman Conquest

King Stephen Tomašević, the last king of the Kingdom of Bosnia.

The last king of the Kotromanić dynasty was King Stjepan Tomašević, who married Princess Maria Branković of Serbia. The two ruled Serbia for two months, until it fell to the Ottomans. After that, the couple fled to Bosnia where they ruled until the Ottomans arrived looking for tribute. **Bosnia's nobility offered little resistance and in 1463, the Ottomans conquered Bosnia-Herzegovina.** In the process, Tomašević renegged on his agreements to compensate the Ottomans, making him a wanted fugitive in his own country. Tomašević retreated to his inland stronghold in the town of Ključ, where the Ottomans caught up with him and besieged the fort where he had taken refuge. It is unclear as to how Tomasevic expected to hold off the Ottoman pursuers, having around him only a small contingent protection force. The fort quickly ran and carried out the sentence of executing him.

Islam With the Ottomans

The Emperor's mosque (Careva džamija) is the oldest mosque in Sarajevo, and among the oldest in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Built around 1520, the mosque has been maintained and restored ever since.

Islam arrived in Bosnia and Herzegovina as early as the 8th century by means of Khazar invaders and Arab and Bulgarian tradesmen. Upon its arrival, the religion peaked the interests of Bosnia and Herzegovina's monotheistic community. As a strict monotheistic religion, Islam proposed a direct relationship between the adherent and God, bypassing the church as a functional intermediary. While this characteristic was perceived as a threat to the power of the Christian church, the Christian clergy did not pay much attention to it as they did not fear mass conversion.

However, after the Ottomans arrived in the mid-15th century, Bosnians began to embrace Islam in large numbers. The Ottomans set exemplary models that showed interest in the welfare of the poor, they demonstrated high moral values and integrity in their business dealings, and they exercised influence due to their economic and military superiority.

By the end of the 16th century, about two-thirds of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina was Muslim (459 Malcolm). The Ottomans favored Bosnia and Herzegovina, elevating it to the stauts of a Vilayet (also Elayet) or Province of the Ottoman Empire. They made deep investments that resulted in loyalty from Bosnia and Herzegovina's Muslims, and acceptance by Jews and some Christians.

Spanish Inquisition

A common practice during the Spanish inquisition was to torture the alleged heretic Muslims and Jews until they confessed to their heresy. If they refused to convert to Catholicism or leave then they could be burned to death at the stake. Image: Wood engraving by Bocort by Henry Duff Linton; courtesy of Wellcome Trust, UK.

The *Tribunal del Santo Oficio de la Inquisición*, or The Tribunal of the Holy Office of the Inquisition, commonly known as *Inquisición Española*, or the Spanish Inquisition, was established in 1478 by King Ferdinand II of Aragon and Queen Isabella I of Castile. The inquisition began in the twelfth century CE and became backed by church statute in 1232 under the Papacy of Gregory IX.

The Inquisition was established to identify so-called heretics among converts from Judaism and Islam to Catholicism. However, in 1492 and 1502, decrees were issued that Muslims and Jews who did not convert to Catholicism would be ordered to leave Spain and Portugal.

Sephardic Migration

The Sarajevo Haggadah, a 14th century manuscript brought to Bosnia-Herzegovina by migrant Jews from Spain. The Haggadah is a national treasure of Bosnia and Herzegovina and is housed at the Zemaljski Muzej/National Museum in Sarajevo.

Sephardic Jews from Spain and Portugal made their way to Ottoman lands, as did Spanish Musims. Some 30,000 took refuge in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where they found a mixed welcome. In small towns and villages, the Sephardim prospered. However, in cities, and towns with majority Catholic or Orthodox populations, the Jews suffered. Many Muslims also migrated; although they quickly assimilated into Bosnia and Herzegovina's resident Muslim society.

Vilayet of Bosnia

In 1580 CE, Ferhad Paša Sokolović was the first governor of the Bosnia Vilayet, which included the Sandžak of Bosnia, Sandžak of Herzegovina, Sandžak of Vučitrn (Priština), Sandžak of Prizren (Kosovo), Sandžak of Klis (in central Dalmatia), Sandžak of Krka (in Croatia), and Sandžak of Pakrac (in Slavonia). Image from 17th century CE by Georg Wickgram. Source: Universitäts Bibliothek Heidelberg, Germany.

After the Ottomans conquered the lands of the Bosnian Kingdom in 1463 CE, they declared the territory to be a *Sandžak* or district that came under Ottoman authority and administrative control. By 1580 CE, the Ottomans declared Bosnia-Herzegovina to be a *Vilayet* (also *Elayet*), a governed entity with some local authority and powers. They declared the Sandzak of Bosnia as the central province in the Vilayet.

The Ottomans changed the socio-political makeup of Bosnia-Herzegovina and introduced land rights as well as a social system to accommodate classes of citizens and affiliations.

The Ottomans were so influential in Bosnia, that the schism created between the Roman and Eastern Orthodox churches, was quickly filled by conversion to Islam. **The Ottomans' policy of favoring Muslims accelerated voluntary conversion, and Bosnia's population emerged as the largest Slavic-speaking Muslim community in the region.**

PROVINCIAL PROSPERITY

The city of Mostar was a major investment center for the Ottomans, who built the famous Stari Most, or Old Bridge. The bridge was destroyed during the war in 1993 but rebuilt (above) and now preserved as a UNESCO landmark.

As the Ottomans expanded into Central Europe, they brought investment from Sultans that resulted in unprecedented urban growth. Bosnia's special status as an Ottoman Vilayet, or autonomous province, brought investments from both private and public sectors of the Ottoman Empire. **The Ottomans invested in cities and infrastructure. They built schools and institutions. They allowed Bosnians and Herzegovinians a level of autonomy that the people had not seen since the early days of the medieval kingdom.** Ottoman investments that persist even today in Bosnia and Herzegovina are prominent institutions such as the national library, and Gazi Huzrev Beg mosque, among others.

With accelerated investment, Bosnians started playing important roles in the Ottoman Empire itself. They joined the Ottoman army and achieved decisive military victories, garnering even higher ranks in the military bureaucracy and aristocracy.

Turkish Taxation

Image of the battle of Vienna, by Julius Kossak.

Under financial duress, Ottoman Sultan Mehmed II, also known as Mehmed the Conqueror, imposed new taxes, and increased oversight over financial matters in Bosnia. Bosnia's middle and lower classes were hardest hit by the new taxation. Sultan Mehmed had to raise massive amounts of capital, so he naturally targeted taxation at the largest population segments in the Empire.

The additional taxes and increased harassment by tax collectors and auditors, led to discontent among the merchant and middle classes. However, the lower classes and peasant farm workers felt threatened. After payment of taxes they became disenfranchised, so they brought about local resistance and disfavor upon the Ottomans. There just wan't enough money in Bosnia and Herzegovina to get the Ottomans out of their deep fiscal deficit.

Adding to the deficit, by 1699 CE, the Ottomans faced military setbacks as European powers formed the Holy League of Christian nations. **Compounding military losses brought the Ottomans to sign the Treaty of Karlowitz, marking the end of Ottoman dominance, and the beginning of Austro-Hungarian rule.**

HUSEIN GRADAŠČEVIĆ

Husein-kapetan Gradaščević was Governor of Bosnia and Herzegovina under Ottoman rule in the 19th century. He was known as "Zmaj od Bosne" (the Dragon of Bosnia), for his work in establishing Bosnian autonomy. Photo from Safvet-beg Bašagić, "Znameniti hrvati, bošnjaci i hercegovci u turskoj carevini;" Zagreb 1931.

In 1831 CE, Husein Gradaščević was elected head of the Bosnian Autonomous Movement. He dismissed the Ottoman Vizier and administrative officials, promoting himself to the rank of Paša (Pasha) of the Bosnian Pašalka (principality). Gradaščević hailed from a military family and commanded the Gradačac military unit.

Gradaščević reacted to increasing tensions between Bosnians desiring autonomy, the Ottomans, Serbia and their Russian allies. The commander secured the Bosnian Vilayet's borders, but feared incursions by Serbs as a provocation to war. As the Ottomans became preoccupied with the preservation of the empire, Gradaščević led his army in pursuit of autonomy for Bosnia and Herzegovina. He led his forces in many battles and defeated the Ottoman Vizier in the battle of Štiml in Kosovo. However, after losing later skirmishes, Gradaščević was finally defeated in battle outside Sarajevo when reinforcements from Herzegovina arrived to support the Ottomans against Gradaščević. Bosnia and Herzegovina was turned over to the Austro-Hungarians for administration, and Gradaščević was left to history and the fond memory of Bosnians and Herzegovinians.

AUSTRO-HUNGARIANS

Image of the storming of the castle of Sarajevo.

In the late 19th century, the Austro-Hungarian army quickly overcame armed resistance and took over most of Bosnia. Peasant resistance in Herzegovina unleashed military force that resulted in the mass emigration of Muslims from the region, especially the working class and farmers.

The Austro-Hungarian annexation of Bosnia meant that Bosnia's Muslim majority would lose their favored status because of their religion. To isolate Bosnia's Muslim clergy, which had retained allegiance to the Ottoman Sultan, the Austro-Hungarians made the Muslim clergy employees of the state; thus, subjecting them to official policy and rules. Bosnia's Muslims responded with political opposition, demanding religious autonomy, first from the Austro-Hungarians, then from the Ottomans as well.

In 1878, German Chancellor Otto Von Bismark presided over the Treaty of Berlin that divided Ottoman territory among European powers. The Treaty recognized the sovereignty of Serbia and placed Bosnia under Austro-Hungarian administration.

While the Austro-Hungarians brought European knowledge, architecture and culture, which benefited the population in Bosnia in some ways, they also created cultural challenges in other ways. Nonetheless, as the Austro-Hungarians imposed their political will, pan-nationalistic resistance in Serbia gained momentum.

In 1844, a policy called *Načertanije* was created by Ilija Garašanin, who borrowed it from a Polish document that addressed Serbian conduct in the region (492 Anzulović). Supported by Serbian elite and the Orthodox church, *Načertanije* called for the creation of a dominant Serbian state by declaring Serbia's neighbors, namely Croatians and Bosnians and Herzegovinians to be "devoid of national consciousness" (492 Anzulović, 493 Cohen). *Načertanije* gave the Serbs cause to dehumanize non-Serbs who they felt were in their territory. More than a century after *Načertanije* was published, its principles were used by Slobodan Milošević to justify genocide, mass murder, ethnic cleansing and other atrocities against Serbia's neighbors in the 1990's.

Archduke's Assassination

Recruited and molded by Serbia's secret Black Hand Society, Serb ultra-nationalist Gavrilo Princip shot and assassinated the Archduke Franz Ferdinand in the streets of Sarajevo. Princip's second shot, which was meant for the Austro-Hungarian Governor of Bosnia-Herzegovina, hit the Archduke's wife, Duchess Sophie, who was also killed.

With Serb nationalism rising, a young recruit, named Gavrilo Princip, was enlisted in the secret Serbian Black Hand Society, whose aim was to destabilize Austro-Hungarian rule in order to fulfill on a vision called out in the *Nacertanije* manifesto, and to begin the process of building the nation that historically eluded the Serbian people, the state of *Velika Srbija*, or Greater Serbia.

Princip was led to believe the secret society was working at unifying South Slavs into a union, free of Austro-Hungarian rule. Acting with other members of the Black Hand Society, in 1914, Princip shot and assassinated Austro-Hungarian Archduke, Franz Ferdinand and killed the Archduke's wife, Dutchess Sophie of Hohenberg. Princip later confessed that he didn't mean to kill the Dutchess, and that the second shot was intended to kill the Austrian Governor-General of Bosnia, Oskar Potiorek. Princip was part of a Serbian plot to oust Austr-Hungarian rule from territory they considered Serb.

First World War

Russian army amassing to help Srebia.

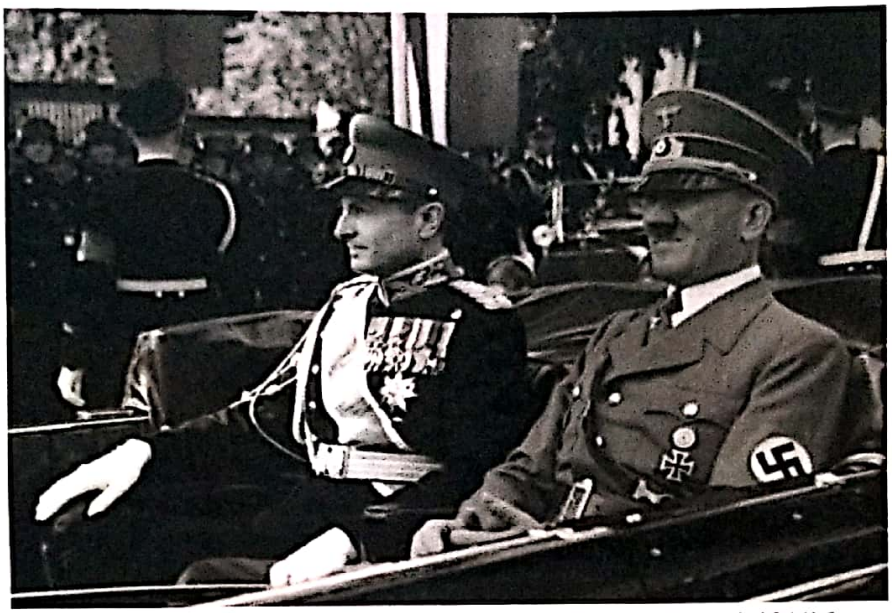
Reincarnating medieval ideology, King Alexander of Serbia reinstated the Kingdom of Serbs, and annexed Bosnia-Herzegovina. Compounded with the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand, the Austro-Hungarians declared war against Serbia.

On July 28, 1914, the Austro-Hungarians declared war against Serbia, and then attacked Belgrade, the capital city. The Russians took Serbia's side, and marched against the Austro-Hungarians, marking the beginning of World War I.

Following Armistice in November 1918, ending World War I, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes annexed surrounding territory and incorporated Bosnia-Herzegovina into its fold. A series of struggles ensued, with the Serbians seeking centralized control and the Croatians seeking regional authority.

Through the turmoil of war and Armistice, Bosnia's political goal was to protect its Ottoman territorial boundary. Mehmed Spaho was the first Bosniak politician in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. He architected the strategy to keep Bosnia's borders intact.

SECOND WORLD WAR



King Paul (Pavle) of the Kingdomof Yugoslavia with Adolf Hitler.

After the end of the first World War, Bosnia's identity was lost within a larger Yugoslav Kingdom. However, with Germany signing treaties with Italy and Japan, Axis forces invaded Yugoslavia, and Bosnia was torn apart between Serbs and Croats. The Croats sided with Nazi Germany, and the Serbs flipped back and forth between Axis and Allied powers several times.

As Germany signed treaties with Italy and Japan, Axis forces invaded the territory of Yugoslavia and Bosnia fell into the hands of the Croatians, who allied with the Nazis.

During the Second World War, the Croats adopted fascist ideology and allied with the Nazis to murder hundreds of thousands of Serbs, Jews, Muslims, Gypsies and anti-fascist Croats. The Croats formed concentration camps where about a million prisoners were interred.

The Croatian Ustaša ordered the extermination of Jews in the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Ustasa killed about 400,000 people in Bosnia, among them 300,000 Serbs, 30,000 Jews, and the rest were Muslims and Gypsies. The Serbs retaliated, killing thousands of Croats and Muslims in the process.

Serbian Cetniks fought against the Croat Ustase but did not want o take on Italian fascists or the Germans, so they collaborated with the Italians in Dalmacija and Montenegro, and with the Germans in Slovenia. When Allied forces gained momentum in Yugoslavia, the Cetniks started collaborating with them as well.

Četniks & Partisans

Četnik leader Dragoljub (Draža) Mihajlović in trial chanbers in 1946, where he was found guilty of collaboration with Nazi forces, war crimes against Yugoslav civilians, and activities against Allied forces. In 2015, a politically motivated Serbian court invalidated the conviction contending that the post second world war trial was unfair and that the court was controlled by a Communist government.

A Serb loyal to the Serbian Kingdom, Dragoljub (Draža) Mihajlović formed a resistance movement known as *Četniks*. At first, Mihajlović's band fought against the *Ustaše*, but later they flipped back and forth between Axis and Allied powers. On both sides, the *Četniks* committed atrocities and war crimes against Croats and Muslims, for which Mihajlović was hanged.

During World War II, Josip Broz Tito formed a resistance movement known as the Partisans. Tito's Partisans were effective in defending Bosnia and Serbia against the Nazis and their Croat allies, and against the Četniks. At the end of the war, Tito emerged as leader of Communist Yugoslavia.

Tito formed the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) as the state consisting of the six republics, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, and Macedonia. The SFRY also included two autonomous provinces, Kosovo and Vojvodina. Tito maintained his grip on the republics but ensured their inter-dependence and relative prosperity.

Tito

Yougoslav leader Marshall Josip Broz Tito pulled together scarce fighting resources to mount a resistance to Nazi occupation. He later parlayed those skills into eventually pulling together disparate republics into the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Josip Broz Tito emerged out of the Second World War as the architect and leader of a socialist federation of Yugoslavia that lasted from 1943 to 1992. Tito's form of self-styled social communism focused on self-management that differentiated Yugoslavia from other socialist and communist countries. Tito promoted a sense of brotherhood and unity among the six republics and two autonomous regions that formed Yugoslavia.

By forming the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA), Tito broke Yugoslavia's dependence on the Soviet Red Army. Resisting a takeover by the Soviet Union, Tito distanced himself and Yugoslavia from Joseph Stalin, effectively moving Yugoslavia out of Soviet reach. Tito then reached out to Western nations so that Yugoslavia could benefit from aid by the US through the Marshall Plan.

Playing both the Axis and Allied powers, Tito led the founding of the Non-Aligned Movement of states not formally aligned with any major power bloc.

Tito's Death

State funeral procession carrying the casket of Yugoslav leader Josip Broz Tito.

During his presidency, Josip Broz Tito introduced constitutional reforms and created alliances that brought Yugoslavia international respect. Under Tito's leadership, and with support from the Soviet Union, the Yugoslav People's Army became Europe's fourth most powerful fighting force. Domestically, Tito instituted a form of social bond called *"bratstvo jedinstvo,"* a state encouraged, yet artificial form of unified brotherhood among all Jugoslavs.

After Tito's death, tensions rose among the republics, as each one tried to curb Serbia's appetite for greater power and control. The brotherhood and unity that Tito had built had completely eroded, and mistrust was rampant among the fragmented ethnic population of the country. By 1991, Yugoslavia physically disintegrated with its republics seceding.

Under the dictatorship of Serbian leader Slobodan Milošević, Slovenia, Croatia, Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Kosovo seceded from Yugoslavia Milosevic ordered the Yugoslav army in wars against all except Montenegro. The wars resulted in the worst atrocity in Europe since the Second World War.

REFERENDUM FOR SECESSION

Referendum promotional artifact from 1992.

Just as Slovenia declared independence from a crumbling Yugoslavia by amending its constitution in June 1991, Croatia declared independence with a view to fully implementing its secession by October that year. Leveraging the tensions that were created by the independence movements, Yugoslav President Slobodan Milošević mobilized the Yougoslav People's Army (JNA) and various Serb paramilitary groups to attack Slovenia first, then Croatia.

Milošević put into action attack patterns that were being developed by the JNA high command in 1990 (494 Judah), well ahead of the independence declarations. Known as the RAM plan, or *Brana Plan* (also referred to sometimes as Rampart-91), the operation focused on a proposal by JNA's Psychological Operations Department (395 Salzman) to organize Orthodox outside of Serbia to engage in coordinated and systematic violence, consolidate resources of the Serbian Democratic Parties (SDS), and prepare arms and munitions for delivery to paramilitary assets. All this was designed to achieve the goal of coalescing Serbs and Orthodox to establish a country where their "territories" could form a single state. By September 1991, this plan was in full effect with senior JNA leadership at its helm (337 Allen). The plan was the anchor point for Milošević and his counterpart in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Radovan Karadžić (338 Ramet), and the bloody activities and atrocities that were about to unfold.

As Slovenia and Croatia found themselves mired in war with the JNA and remnants of the former Yugoslavia, details of the RAM plan were leaked to the Belgrade weekly, *Vreme* (496 Lukić). Alarmed by the plans, Bosnia and Herzegovina sought council with members of the European Economic Community (EEC). A commission known as the Badinter Arbitration Committee was set up by the EEC to review the matter. The Badinter Committee refused to recognize Bosnia and Herzegovina because the republic had not held a referendum, which was required as part of the process to dissolve internal boundaries without agreement among the republics.

Flag of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina which was adopted upon declaration of independence. This flag was recognized internationally and flew at the United Nations for the duration of the 1992-1995 war.

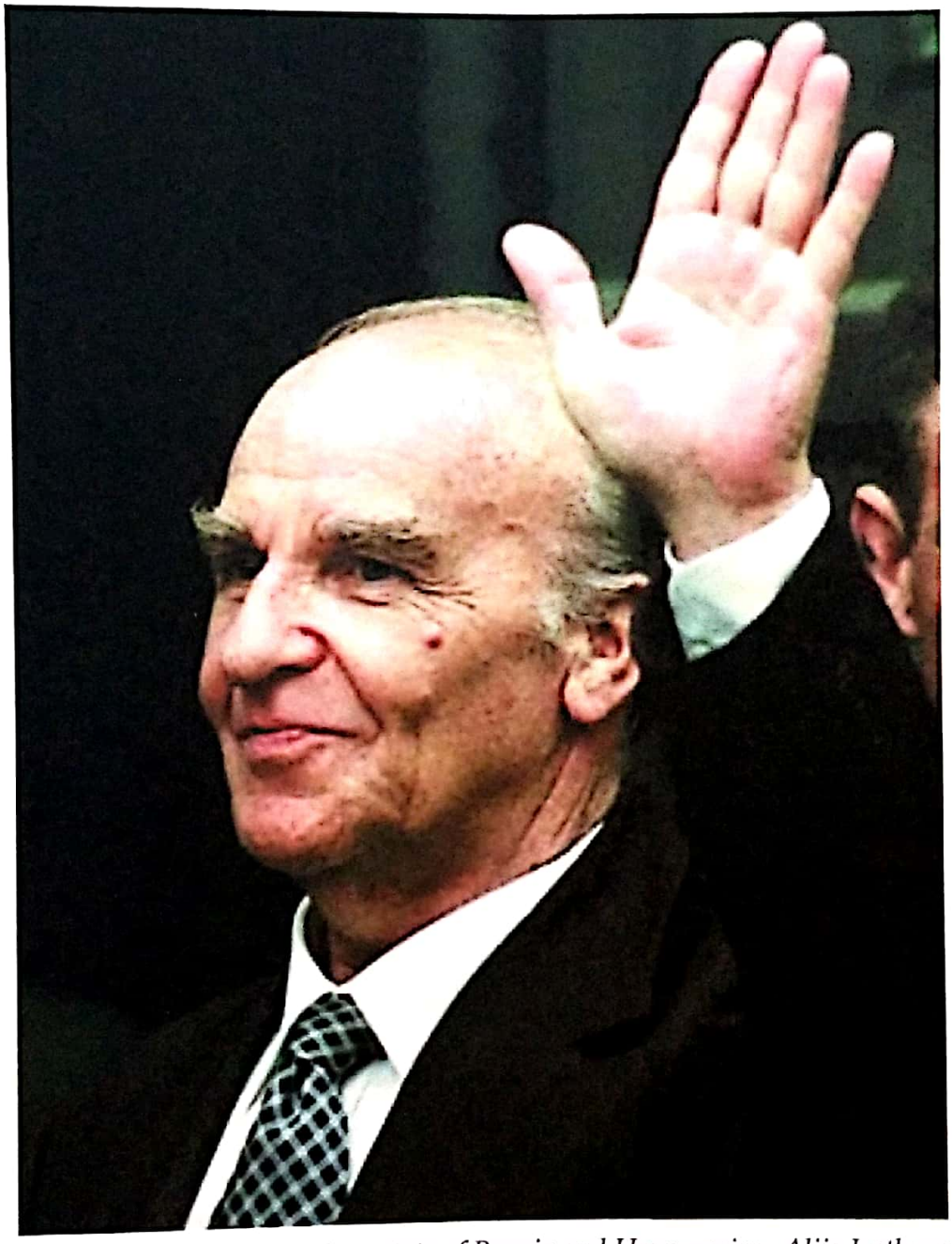
Between February 29 and March 1, 1992, Bosnia and Herzegovina held a referendum asking its citizens to choose whether to secede from Yugoslavia. Known as the Referendum for Bosnia and Herzegovina, the citizens of the republic were asked to vote on the question of independence.

As the referendum was being planned, Serbia's military leadership began intimidating Bosnia and Herzegovina's Orthodox population through various psychological means. Belgrade's propaganda machine kicked into high gear, cranking out manipulative and disruptive messaging. Serbia's political leaders quickly anointed their puppets in Bosnia and Herzegovina and orchestrated a campaign that included veiled and open threats as well as the possibilities of gloom and doom.

The turnout of voters was close to two-thirds majority, out of which 99.7% voted in favor of independence. Some scholars argue that the turnout was only 63.4%, while others state it was better than 65.9%. There is virtually no way to demonstrate the accuracy of any of the percentages due to a high level of psychological manipulation and external intervention leading to a corruption of the baseline information available for statistical analysis to the level of precision required by such a debate. Due to the Serbian propaganda, many of Bosnia and Herzegovina's citizens had left the republic and taken up residence in other parts of what remained of the former Yugoslavia. Since Bosnia and Herzegovina was a republic within the federated ex-Yugoslavia, its residents were relatively free to move or reside in other republics. The same was true for residents of other republics, who could move to Bosnia and Herzegovina, or arbitrarily declare residence there.

A broad study in 2010 stated that out of 3.2 million registered voters, about 2.1 million turned out, with nearly all voting in favor of independence (497 Nohlen). However, the study only restates results from the election committee without further examining external intervention, meddling or evaluating the legitimacy of registered voters.

Independence



The first President of the modern state of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Alija Izetbegović.

Shortly after the referendum, Bosnia's leader, Alija Izetbegović, transformed his role from Chairman of the Presidency of the Socialist Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina under Yugoslavia, to a member of the Presidency of an independent Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Under Izetbegović's leadership, the newly independent country gained recognition from the United States of America, the Ministerial Council of the European Community, other nations and the United Nations.

War and Genocide

Sarajevo's twin towers, Momo and Uzejr, burning after shelling by Serb forces in the 1992-1995 war. Photo:

On March 2, 1992, armed Serbs setup barricades and surrounded the national Parliament building, threatening a military coup of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Over the coming weeks, Sarajevo residents protested the barricades, but were shot at by Serb snipers.

Unwilling to accept his loss of grip on a crumbling Yugoslavia, Serbia's President Slobodan Milošević, ordered the *Jugoslavenska Narodna Armija* (JNA), Yugoslav People's Army, to besiege Bosnia's capital, Sarajevo. The siege lasted 1,425 days, the longest siege of a city in modern military history. Serb forces then began shelling and sniping at Sarajevo residents. Some 14,000 people were killed in the besieged city.

The war in Bosnia-Herzegovina resulted in genocide and the deaths of more than 100,000. Approsimately 2.2 million people were displaced. Serb military and paramilitary units had setup and were running rape and torture centers and concentration camps across territory they controlled militarily. The mass atrocities conducted by Serb forces have taken more than two decades to uncover. The final act of the Bosnian genocide was the massacre of more than 8,372 boys and men in the UN protected enclave of Srebrenica, in Eastern Bosnia.

A French soldier committed to the UN mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina stands guard in Sarajevo behind barbed wire. Photo © 1992 Irfan Mirza.

The criminal partnership between the JNA and Bosnia's Serbs turned a besieged Bosnia and Herzegovina into a menagerie of massacre, rape, torture, concentration camps and atrocities, the likes of which Europe hadn't seen since the Second World War.

In February 1992, United Nations' (UN) peacekeepers were deployed in Croatia to monitor a ceasefire between Croats and Serbs. With the outbreak of war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the UN sent more international military and civilian personnel and extended the force's mandate to protect civilians in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The UN force was named the United Nations' Protection Force, or UNPROFOR for short.

By June 1992, UNPROFOR was mandated to protect Sarajevo airport to allow humanitarian aid and diplomatic missions in and out the besieged capital. By September, the mandate was expanded to escort humanitarian aid and protect UN declared "safe areas." At its peak, the UN military mission to region numbered over 36,000 personnel. Despite that large body of international military observers, peace keepers, and enforcers of international law, the Bosnian war lasted three and a half years. In that period, more than 100,000 people were killed, more than 2.2 million were displaced from their homes, an estimated 26,000 girls and women were raped as a "tactic" of war, and tens of thousands of men and women were additionally raped, tortured and executed in concentration camps.

Grave markers at the Srebrenica memorial in Potočari. The memorial prominently displays a semi-circular stone block with engraved names of the victims. Photo © 2017 Irfan Mirza.

In the eastern Bosnian town of Srebrenica, 8,372 boys and men were killed by Serb forces in four days, and then buried in mass graves so their bodies could not be found. The International Criminal Tribunal for ex-Yugoslavia (ICTY) adjudicated the massacre was an act of genocide.

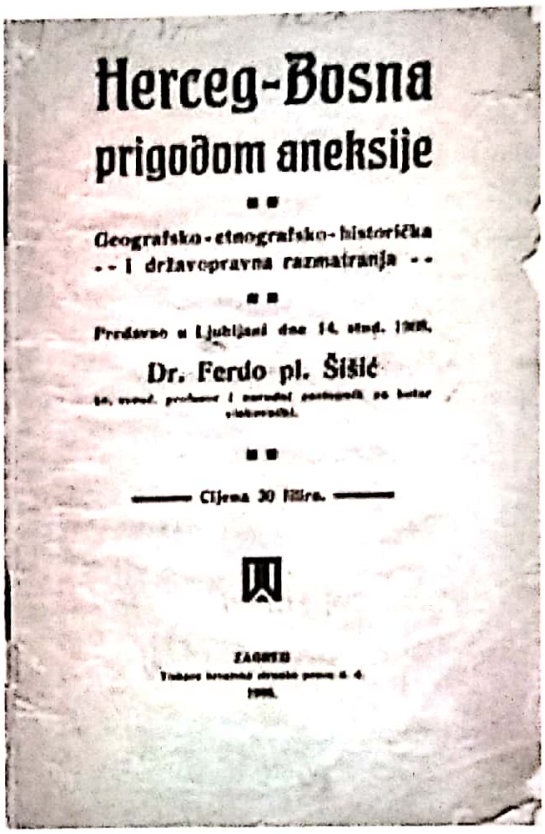
In February 1994, Serb forces fired a heavy artillery shell into a public marketplace in the heart of Sarajevo. The attack killed 68 and wounded 144. In August 1995, the Serbs launched a similar attack, killing 43 and wounding 75. The second attack violated a UN declared exclusion zone around Sarajevo.

Other atrocities across Bosnia and Herzegovina have been documented, including the mass murder of prisoners at the Tomašica concentration camp in northwestern Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 2013, a mass grave was uncovered, where more than 850 bodies were exhumed by international forensic experts from the International Commission on Missing Persons (ICMP).

International courts have adjudicated that genocide was carried out by Serb forces in Srebrenica, Žepa and Doboj. Serb leader Radovan Karadžić and military commander Ratko Mladić were indicted on counts of genocide in Prijedor, Ključ, and other municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina; however, the court favored a narrow definition of genocide as "the physical or biological destruction of all or part of a protected group, and a specific intent to commit such destruction." Under this controversial definition, the court determined that the prosecution failed to show genocidal intent on the part of Karadzic in the counts of genocide beyond Srebrenica.

A Croatian State within the State

In January 1993, Bosnia and Herzegovina's separatist Catholics were armed and funded by neighboring Croatia to dissect a region of Bosnia and Herzegovina, that they would call Herceg-Bosna, so named after Ferdo Šišić's conceptual idea from the time of Austro-Hungarian rule over the region.



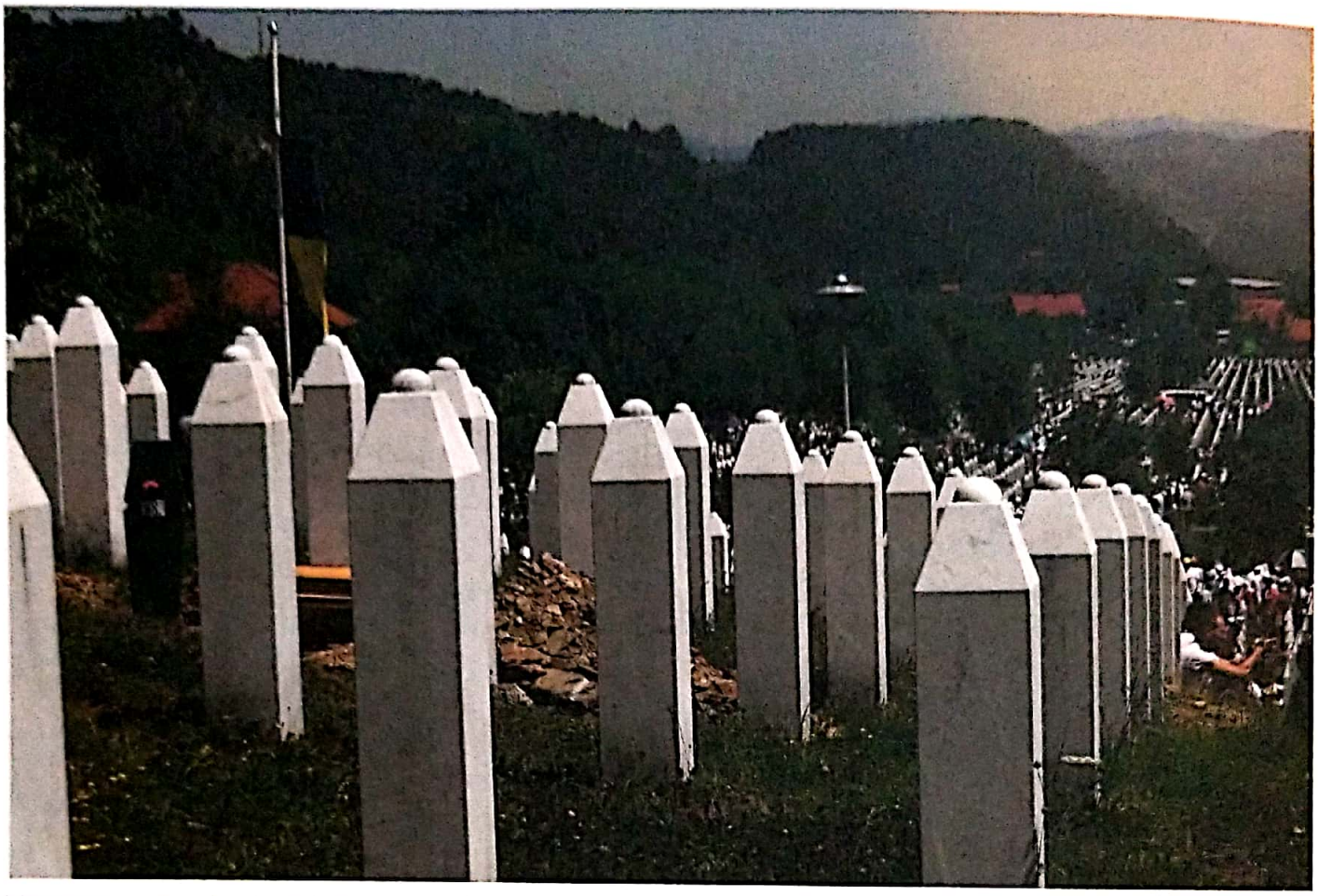
Borrowing from Ilja Garašanin's idea, Ferdo Šišić, a Croatian historian first proposed the idea of an ethnically pure Croat state within Bosnia and Herzegovina that he called Herceg-Bosna. The image is from his book written in 1908 entitled "Herceg-Bosna."

In the initial stages of the war against Bosnia and Herzegovina, Catholics joined the Republic Army (ARBiH) while the majority of fighting age men and some women joined an organization known as the *Hrvatsko vijeće obrane* (HVO), or Croatian Defense Council. The HVO fought alongside ARBiH. However, after instigation by Croatian President Franjo Tudžman, the HVO command betrayed their ARBiH allies and resorted to treason. Their tactics included joint criminal activity, mass murders, systematic rape and torture, and organized concentration camps where they held and abused military and civilian prisoners.

The HVO became the military arm of political opportunists in Herzegovina who unilaterally decided to separate from Bosnia and Herzegovina, in violation of domestic and international law. The separatist movement was given new life in August 1993 when a European plan, known as the Owen-Stoltenberg Plan, proposed that Bosnia and Herzegovina be organized into three republics, one of them being Herzeg-Bosna. However, ARBiH and the government of Bosnia and Herzegovina remained firm on rejecting any proposal that would divide Bosnia and Herzegovina.

By March 1994, an agreement was reached in Washington DC, ending the conflict between separatist HVO militias and political entities and the government of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Under the agreement, Herzeg-Bosna reverted to Bosnia and Herzegovina as a federation. Despite the agreement, the separatist entity continued to exist until 1996, when laws had to be passed to abolish it.

Srebrenica Genocide



New graves dug in 2017 to bury remains of exhumed bodies from mass graves where victims of the Srebrenica genocide were hidden. Each year, tens of thousands of Bosnians and Herzegovinians visit the memorial cemetery at Potočari to commemorate and remember the victims of the Srebrenica genocide. Photo © 2017 Irfan Mirza.

The most tragic incident in the modern genocide on Bosnian and Herzegovinian soil is undoubtedly the Serbrenica genocide, where 8,372 boys and men were mass executed by Serb forces after they handed over any defensive weapons they possessed. The victims were separated from the women in their families, and bused to various locations where they were tortured, raped, beaten, and killed. Their bodies were buried in large ditches that had been dug by heavy excavating equipment. Dirt was bulldozed over the bodies and the mass graves were covered by shrubs.

US air reconnaince spotted the change in topography, confirming the location of the mass graves. The incident received broad media coverage, forcing a response from international leaders, including US President Bill Clinto, who called his national security advisor asking for accountability of how an atrocity such as this could happen in modern times.

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telcon with French President Jacques Chirac

PARTICIPANTS: The President
President Jacques Chirac
Notetaker: Alexander Vershbow and Anthony Gardner

DATE, TIME AND PLACE: July 13, 1995, 3:22-3:58 p.m.
Oval Office

The President: Hello, Jacques? (U)

President Chirac: Hello, Bill. How are you? I will speak in French. I'm very worried about Bosnia and there are things we want you to know. *(Switching to French)* First of all, my congratulations on the strong statement you issued that if we cannot restore the UN mission, then the days of UNPROFOR are numbered and that that causes you concern. Our analysis is the same. The fall of Srebrenica, the probable fall of Zepa tomorrow and the real threat to Gorazde represent a major failure of the UN, NATO and all the democracies. You see what we are seeing on TV, how the Serbs are separating men from women, sending women to be raped and killing men who are old enough to bear arms. In my opinion, we can no longer just stand by and watch this. [redacted] 1.4

This memorandum was declassified by the White House under the Freedom of Information Act in 2016 and made available courtesy of the William J. Clinton Presidential Library and Museum. The document memorializes a telephone conversation dated July 13, 1995 between US President Bill Clinton and French President Jacques Chirac. In the conversation, President Chirac explains how men and women in Srebrenica were separated, ans "men who are old enough to bear arms" were being killed. The next sentence in the memorandum is redacted to protect the White House and/or the French Presidency from further incrimination. As this conversation was taking place, international court records and findings show that Serb forces in Srebrenica were carrying out acts of genocide against more than 8,000 non-Serb civilian men and boys who had disarmed and surrendered under the protection of United Nations' Protection Forces in Srebrenica.

Genocide in Prijedor

Beginning of the excavation at the Tomašica mass burial site, where more than 850 bodies of victims of mass execution were exhumed. Photo courtesy of Mirsad Duratović.

The historic record of the genocide across Bosnia and Herzegovina is clear. While the Srebrenica genocide is the largest genocidal massacre in the Bosnian war, Prijedor holds the sad distinction as the second largest. More than 3,000 Bosnian Muslims and Catholics from Prijedor were killed; many continued to be missing even two decades later. Altogether, in the greater Prijedor region, about 14,000 people were killed, including the elderly, children, and disabled. They were slaughtered in an act of genocide, by the definition adopted at the United Nations from 1948. By 2013, 96 mass graves were found, and more than 2,100 bodies exhumed and identified. Countless remain unidentified. The mass grave at Tomašica is the largest grave in Europe since the Holocaust. The one at Jakarina Kosa in Prijedor munica is the third largest, after Kamenica in Srebrenica.

The events of the Prijedor genocide (498 Allen) were planned by Orthodox members of the Prijedor Municipal Assembly in December 1991. Milomir Stakić took over as President of the Assembly in an attempted coup d'état—an act of treason against the state. Clandestine police stations and jails were setup, Orthodox civilians were armed, and soldiers of the JNA were deployed. The propaganda machine was started, to enrage Orthodox masses to lynch anyone who could not demonstrate Orthodox Serbian nationality, to punish them, even to kill them on-sight.

Funeral prayer services for newly exhumed bodies of Tomašica mass graves.
Photo courtesy of Mirsad Duratović.

Orders were issued in the municipality that non-Orthodox homes had to hang white flags so they could be identified. Anyone who was not a Serb had to wear white armbands or face death. Through all of this, the church did not step forward to bring their Orthodox back to morality. Attacks started on the village of Hambarine, followed by Kozorac. Non-Serbs who were not killed were then moved to concentration camps: Keraterm, Omarska, Trnopolje, Miška Glava, and Žarko Zgonjanin Baraka, among dozens of others. These camps were notorious for torture, rape, murder, and criminal acts that were so horrific, they had to be labeled as crimes against humanity.

The Serb soldiers who committed these crimes, did not fight for their nation. They fought against it. They were not patriots. They were traitors who betrayed and terrorized their own people.

During the last week of May 1992, Serb authorities in Prijedor issued a decree that all non-Serb civilians should mark their houses with white sheets and they should wear white armbands when out of their homes. This was not only an act of identification but had the intent of humiliating and degrading everyone who was not Serb. The armband declaration came after Serb forces launched an intensive attack on the town. The International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia cites the following statement about the attack: "The shelling caused Muslim and Croat residents to flee their homes. The majority of them were seized by the Serb forces, who shot or beat them on the spot." This is where Serb forces began taking prisoners, to the notorious concentration camps at Omarska, Keraterm and Trnopolje.

Memorial commemorating the names of victims who were killed between 1992 and 1995 in the town of Kozarac in Prijedor municipality in northwestern Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Memorial commemorating children who were killed between 1992 and 1995 in the capital city of Sarajevo in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the city, 13,952 people were killed, including about 1,500 children, and an additional 15,000 children who were injured. Photo © 2017 Irfan Mirza.

JOINT CRIMINAL ENTERPRISE

Joint criminal enterprise and the Tribunal's Statute: the reference to that crime or to that form of liability does not need to be explicit to come within the purview of the Tribunal's jurisdiction. The Statute of the ICTY is not and does not purport to be a meticulously detailed code providing for every possible scenario and every solution thereto. It sets out in somewhat general terms the jurisdictional framework within which the Tribunal has been mandated to operate. The list in Article 7(1) appears to be non-exhaustive in nature as the use of the phrase 'or otherwise aided and abetted' suggests.

The nature of joint criminal enterprise: insofar as a participant shares the purpose of the joint criminal enterprise (as he or she must do) as opposed to merely knowing about it, he or she cannot be regarded as a mere aider and abettor to the crime which is contemplated. Joint criminal enterprise is a form of 'commission' pursuant to Article 7(1) of the Statute.

Joint criminal enterprise and conspiracy: joint criminal enterprise and 'conspiracy' are two different forms of liability. While mere agreement is sufficient in the case of conspiracy, the liability of a member of a joint criminal enterprise will depend on the commission of criminal acts in furtherance of that enterprise.

Joint criminal enterprise and membership in a criminal organisation: criminal liability pursuant to joint criminal enterprise is not a liability for mere membership or for conspiring to commit crimes but a form of liability concerned with the participation in the commission of a crime as part of a joint criminal enterprise, a different matter.

Wording from the ICTY in Prosecutor v. Milutinovic et al. - Case No. IT-99-37-AR72, 21 May 2003.

During the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the international community stalled in a fog of uncertainty as a *joint criminal enterprise* (JCE) was formed under the camouflage of war. A multi-national network formed spanning Serbia, Montenegro, Croatia, Russia, Greece, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and other parts of Europe. The network engaged in criminal activity that seemed on the surface to contribute to the political goals of the war; however, it also resulted in personal and situational gains for the perpetrators. The JCE engaged in ethnic cleansing, mass rape, torture, mass murder, and genocide, among other crimes, that provided material gain to criminals.

The Appeals Chamber of the International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia (ICTY) deliberated and handed down definitions on May 21, 2003 describing *joint criminal enterprise*, its nature and associated liabilities (499 ICTY).

During the Bosnian war, the JCE leveraged the existing subterranean moral deficit among tens of thousands of Serbs to entrench public behavior that made it acceptable to rape women, girls and boys, ruthlessly torture civilians and captives, forceably displace entire populations, discriminate and humiliate neighbors and friends, and commit and support sniping, mass murder and genocide.

NATO Intervention

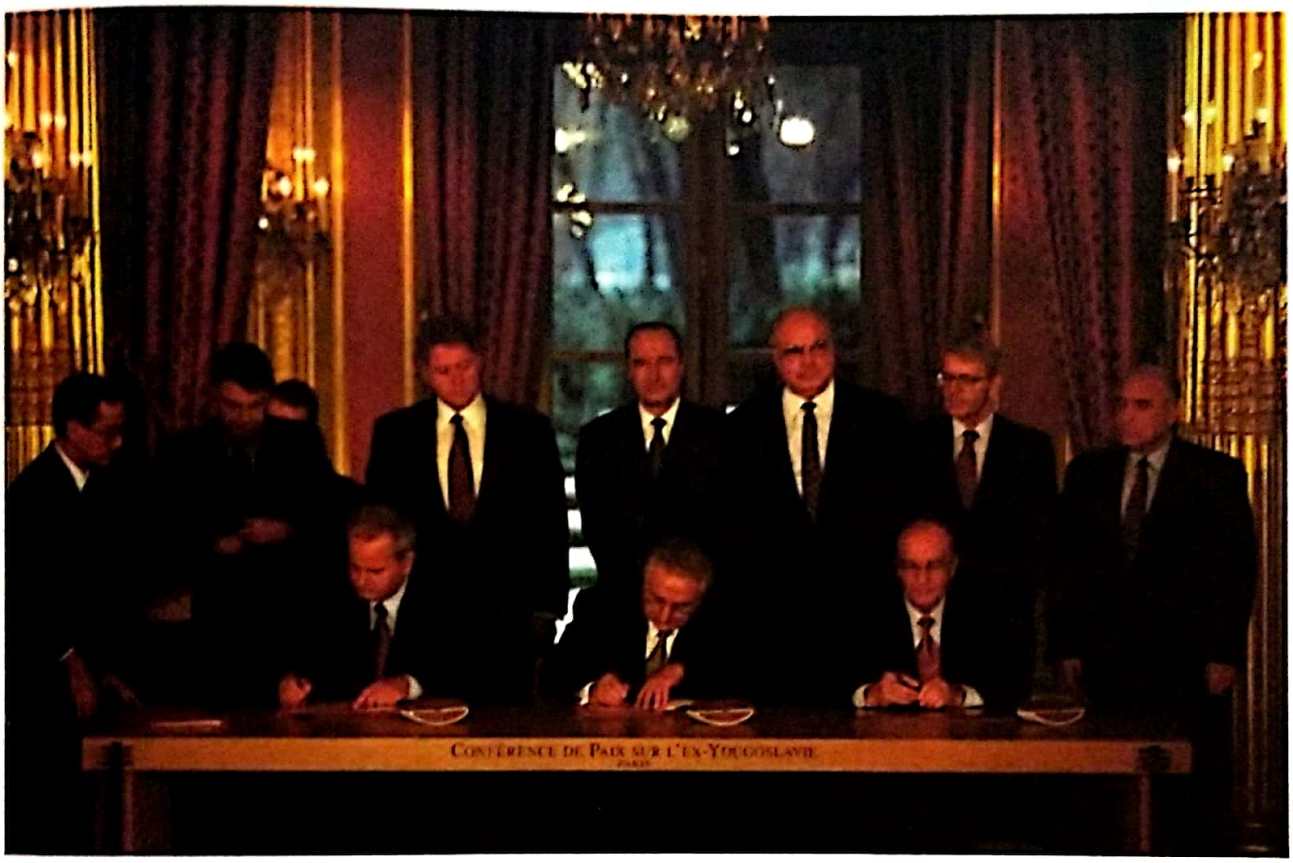
US President Bill Clinton confers with NATO leaders as the cross-Atlantic military power decides on airstrikes by joint command of NATO member nations against strategic Serb positions.

After feeling pressure from members, the United Nations asked NATO to take military action to stop Serb forces from violating UN resolutions in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In August 1995, US President Bill Clinton authorized US forces to lead a NATO military campaign.

From August 30 to September 10, 1995, NATO forces flew more than 3,000 sorties, and dropped more than 1,000 bombs on Serb military forces to move out of UN exclusion zones and safe areas. The UN was also worried about Serb forces holding UN soldiers and staff hostage, in the safe areas where UN personnel were isolated or most vulnerable to attack. Simultaneously, the Bosnian army was advancing against Serb positions in a nation-wide offensive.

The US launched Tomahawk cruise missile strikes from the USS Normandy in the Adriatic Sea, against Serb command targets in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The US Air Force fired precision-guided bombs to repel Serb anti-aircraft batteries. Alongside the US air attacks, the Bosnian army pushed back Serb forces. **Seeking to reverse the Bosnian army's advances, the Serbs agreed to a ceasefire.**

PEACE



Yugoslav President Slobodan Milošević, Croatian President Franjo Tudžman, and Bosnia-Herzegovina's President Alija Izetbegović sign the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Commonly referred to as the Dayton Accords, or just Dayton, the agreement ended the war. Standing behind the signatories are the leaders of the NATO nations and the Russian foreign minister, that supported the US in brokering the agreement.

Building on the momentum of the NATO enforced ceasefire, US special envoy Ambassador Richard Holbrooke led a delegation to architect a lasting peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Under pressure from US President Bill Clinton, the three warring nations, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, penned terms for a peace deal. Seated are Serbia's Slobodan Milošević, Croatia's Franjo Tudžman, and Bosnia-Herzegovina's Alija Izetbegović.

Agreed and initialed in Dayton, Ohio, the peace agreement became known as the Dayton Accords. The agreement called for the removal of the *Jugoslavenska Narodna Armija* (JNA) or the Yugoslav People's Army, from Bosnia-Herzegovina and the implementation of a civil structure of governance that essentially allowed Bosnia's Serb minority to have more rights than they would in a democratic state.

The Dayton Peace Agreement
Text of Dayton Peace Agreement Documents Initialed in Dayton, Ohio on November 21, 1995
GENERAL FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT FOR PEACE IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

The Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (the "Parties"),

Recognizing the need for a comprehensive settlement to bring an end to the tragic conflict in the region,

Desiring to contribute toward that end and to promote an enduring peace and stability,

Affirming their commitment to the Agreed Basic Principles issued on September 8, 1995, the Further Agreed Basic Principles issued on September 26, 1995, and the cease-fire agreements of September 14 and October 5, 1995,

Noting the agreement of August 29, 1995, which authorized the delegation of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to sign, on behalf of the Republika Srpska, the parts of the peace plan concerning it, with the obligation to implement the agreement that is reached strictly and consequently,

Have agreed as follows:

Article I

The Parties shall conduct their relations in accordance with the principles set forth in the United Nations Charter, as well as the Helsinki Final Act and other documents of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. In particular, the Parties shall fully respect the sovereign equality of one another, shall settle disputes by peaceful means, and shall refrain from any action, by threat or use of force or otherwise, against the territorial integrity or political independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina or any other State.

Article II

The Parties welcome and endorse the arrangements that have been made concerning the military aspects of the peace settlement and aspects of regional stabilization, as set forth in the Agreements at Annex 1-A and Annex 1-B. The Parties shall fully respect and promote fulfillment of the commitments made in Annex 1-A, and shall comply fully with their commitments as set forth in Annex 1-B.

Article III

The Parties welcome and endorse the arrangements that have been made concerning the boundary demarcation between the two Entities, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska, as set forth in the Agreement at Annex 2. The Parties shall fully respect and promote fulfillment of the commitments made therein.

Article IV

First page of the Dayton Agreement that was reached in Dayton, Ohio

Dayton accomplished this by ceding territory to Republika Srpska that was claimed by the local Army of the Serb Republik (*Vojska Republika Srpska*—VRS) through ethnic cleansing, mass murder, torture, rape and genocide against the innocent citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

After more than three years of a genocidal war, US mediators convened the warring parties in Dayton, Ohio, where the peace treaty was hammered out at the cost of dividing the nation of Bosnia and Herzegovina into two ethnically polarized entities.

The General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina, (the Dayton Accords) cemented the ethnic divide in Bosnia and Herzegovina, by allocating a Serbian entity, *Republika Srpska*, or the Serb Republic, and a larger entity under the joint control of Muslims, Croats, and Serbs, known as *Federacija*, or the Federation. A small district in northern Bosnia, known as Brčko, was left a self-administered district, even though it was controlled by the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina Army (ARBiH). Brčko presented a problem for Dayton negotiators in that it was controlled by the Federacija, which meant that the Serb Republic would be cut into two halves. To ensure the territorial continuity of the two halves, Dayton negotiators declared Brčko a self-administered district, so that neither side would have control of it; yet, both sides would be able to use its strategic location for transport and commerce.

By forcing decisions, such as the exclusion of Brčko from the Federation, Dayton negotiators created openings for Serb Republic leaders to believe that they could pursue secession from Bosnia and Herzegovina. This was a tactical mistake as the intent of the negotiators was never to place the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina or the continuity of its borders at risk.

More than two decades after Dayton, the ethnic parties in the country had made little progress in terms of reconciliation.

The political constructs that resulted from an ill-structured peace agreement continued to hamper progress in Bosnia and Herzegovina with little to no differentiation between progress in either entity. Suspected criminals took full advantage of the political deadlock that Dayton inadvertently created. The deadlock was a result of equal power being given at the federal or state level to each ethnic group, without regard to the size of the electorate.

The parliamentary system followed to become equally ethnically polarized. The result of the political failure was that Bosnia and Herzegovina was ethnically divided. Its territory became segmented along ethno-political lines. Integration and return of refugees became a nightmare to implement. Security was left in the hands of local authorities. Much of the leadership in parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina where the highest amounts of ethnic cleansing and mass murder had taken place, became riddled with suspected and even accused criminals from the time of the war.

Allusive Justice

Radovan Karadžić, architect of the Bosnian genocide at his trial in the ICTY. Photo ICTY.

Resolution 827 of the United Nations called for the establishment of a special court to prosecute crimes against humanity and war crimes in the former Yugoslavia. The court is known as the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY).

The ICTY has tried some of the most serious and high-profile cases from the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Bringing impartiality to the courtroom, the tribunal has implemented a paradigm of accountability for crimes during the war. It also established the basis to prove acts of genocide by Serbs during the war.

After roaming free for a decade, Radovan Karadzić, the former president of the Bosnian Serb entity of Republika Srpksa, was brought to trial at the ICTY for genocide. Six years later, Serbian General Ratko Mladić was also brought to court on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Both Karadzić and Mladić were found guilty and given lengthy sentences by the ICTY. Another 190 criminals were convicted at the ICTY.

Conclusions

Woman mourns the loss of a loved one at the Potočari Memorial to the Srebrenica genocide in July 1995, when Serb forces massacred more than 8,372 Muslim boys and men.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has been a refuge for humanity for more than 24,000 years. From the first humans to walk into Europe through Bosnia and Herzegovina before the last ice age, to European natives who took refuge there after the last ice age, Bosnia and Herzegovina is a place that has given protection to its population from both natural and manmade catastrophes.

In 800 BC, when the Ilyr migrated to the region, they settled in Bosnia and Herzegovina. When the Slavs escaped slavery in the 5th century, they found refuge in Bosnia and Herzegovina—that's how they got there by the way. When the Avar attacked the tribes around Bosnia and Herzegovina in the 6th century, those tribes found safety in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the 7th century, the Khoroathos marched through Bosnia and Herzegovina to settle in modern-day Croatia—that's how the Croats got to their homeland. In the 9th century, when the king of Posavina, Ljudevit, had to make peace with the Slavs, he held the meeting in Bosnia and Herzegovina. When he was betrayed by the Slavs and had to escape his own kingdom, he escaped to Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the 10th century when the Dalmatians and Slavs felt threatened by the Bulgars, King Tomislav took his army to Bosnia

and Herzegovina to fight Csar Simeon in the battle known as "bitka na bosanskim visoravnima." When Cyril and Methodius went looking for a way to express the Christian liturgy in the local language, their students learned of a Glagolitic script known as Bosančica. When the Old Slavonic Church needed to expand its reach, it adopted the Bosnian dialect, so it could appeal to the masses.

When the Jews were expelled from Spain in the 14th century, they found safety in Bosnia and Herzegovina. When the Croats and Serbs needed to make peace after the Second World War, Bosnia and Herzegovina was there for them. The story of the Sarajevo Haggadah from that time tells you clearly what Bosnians and Herzegovinians believe in.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a land where its native kings protected religious freedom, such as Kralj Tvrtko I. Their belief in the diversity of the nation was so great that they resisted powers such as Rome and the Crusades that tried to homogenize them. In war after war against the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, we saw Bosnians and Herzegovinians defend with the same pattern of bravery, chivalry, respect for humanity, and the protection of the weak. In the last war, Serbian forces tried to strip away all those principles that Bosnians and Herzegovinians have upheld for centuries. But even the fourth most powerful army in Europe couldn't break the Bosnian and Herzegovinian spirit. The country did not capitulate, and it has not given in to the wave of ultra-fascist nationalism that is again threatening it.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has been, and will always be, a multi-confessional nation, where religious differences are respected. The country celebrates two Bajrams, two Christmases, Jewish holidays, and so much more. It is a sanctuary for believers of all faiths. The current wave of fascism that was thrust upon Bosnia and Herzegovina from outside its borders is only a passing anomaly. It is a short blip (breakdown) in the long and rich history of the nation's people. At some point in time, all the residents of Bosnia and Herzegovina will realize that they are all Bošnjak, regardless of whether they are Muslim, Catholic, Orthodox, Jew, Roma, Buddhist, Atheist, Agnostic, or any other confession.

Bosnia and Herzegovina's future is promising, even with the dysfunctional structure that Dayton created in the nation. The differences that are defined by Dayton are artificial, and as such, they have an artificial lifespan. Bosnia and Herzegovina's lifespan dates back to the earliest days of natives in Europe, and it will continue for as long as *Bošnjaks* take care of it. In the foreword to this book, Dr. Silajdžić writes that Bosnia-Herzegovina is an ***"authentically plural society, that, even damaged, still reflects what a united Europe aspires to be."*** And that is the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina, an authentically plural society.

– Irfan Mirza

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Foreword By Dr. Haris Silajdžić

Former Chairman of the Presidency of
Bosnia and Herzegovina

"Competent, objective, honest. This book tells the real history of Bosnia-Herzegovina."
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Irfan Mirza's History of Bosnia & Herzegovinia traces the origins of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina from the days of the first humans in Europe to the modern era. The author presents a refreshing perspective on history, drawing on his years of research on the topic and experience from the region. This book highlights the key moments in history that helped shape the modern state of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

About the Author

Irfan Mirza is a two-time international award winning author, college lecturer, and Chair of Education at the Bosnian American Institute. He published his first book on Bosnia and Herzegovina at the start of the war in April 1992. From '92 to '94, he was Program Director of a humanitarian mission and an advisor to UN field staff in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He gained first-hand knowledge of the people and politics as he criss-crossed frontlines in the war.

Irfan Mirza at Radimlja Necropolis in Herzegovina.
Photo: Selvir Galešić, Expedition Leader, Mostar

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